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Supporting Institutions:
MUSEUM OF CARTOON ART
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NEMO: The Classic Comics Library (ISSN 0746-9438) #7, June, 1984. Published bi-monthly by Fantagraphics Books, Inc., 196 West Haviland Lane, Stamford CT 06903. One-year subscription (six issues): $21.00. Outside the U.S.: $24.00 in U.S. funds. Second-Class postage paid at Stamford CT and additional mailing office. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to: NEMO, 196 W. Haviland Lane, Stamford CT 06903. Entire contents copyright ©1984 Fantagraphics Books, Inc. The articles and essays in *NEMO* are © by their respective authors. Special contents of *NEMO* are © by Richard Marschall and Fantagraphics Books. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without written permission from Fantagraphics Books or Richard Marschall. Letters to **NEMO** become the property of the magazine and are assumed intended for publication in whole or in part, and may therefore be used for those purposes. First printing: May, 1984.

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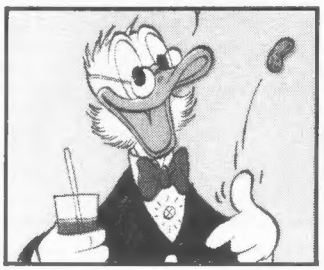

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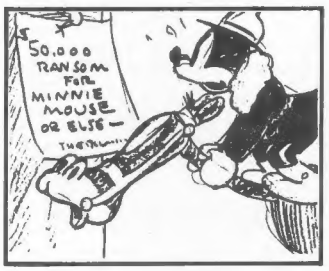

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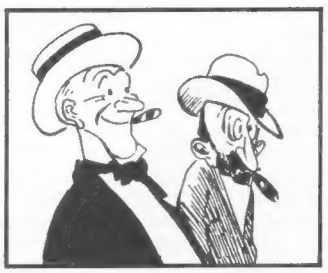

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Capital City Distribution, 2827 Perry Street, Madison WI 53713 U.S.A. (608) 274-8987
Diamond Comic Distributors, 1720 Belmont Ave., Bay B-2, Baltimore MD 21207 U.S.A. (301) 298-1184
Fantagraphics Books, Inc., 196 West Haviland Lane, Stamford CT 06903 U.S.A. (203) 329-7633
Glenwood Distributors, 124 Vandalia, Collinsville IL 62234 U.S.A. (618) 345-1027
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Editorial

Notes And Comments

As you may note in more detail elsewhere in this issue (the prospectus on page 57), *NEMO*'s latest project takes us a step beyond the chronicles/essays/portfolios format that has made up this journal. Indeed, after one year, we have been heartened by readers' response to *NEMO: The Classic Comics Library; NEMO* shall continue stronger than ever, and this issue's color experiment is but a reflection of that strength, and perhaps a portent of the future.

But onward, as we have said. Our First Anniversary gift to the community of perceptive souls who savor the heritage, quality, and potential of this art form is a reprint book-series. The first project of the *NEMO Bookshelf* is *The Complete Segar Popeye*, a major task both ambitious in scope and of significance to scholars and connoisseurs.

Happy First Birthday!

Never in this country has there been an anthologization of the complete work of a major newspaper strip artist. It is part of *NEMO*'s commitment to embark on such ventures. We take this opportunity to announce that we have also signed a contract with King Features Syndicate to reprint a significant portion of Cliff Sterrett's *Polly and Her Pals*, one of the greatest of strip creations. And we are involved in negotiating for other major strips to offer in permanent collections.

Nor, to be sure, are our choices random. Segar's *Popeye* is arguably comics' foremost creation of sustained inspiration—a combination of characterization, narration, satire, pathos, burlesque, and humor that has been occasionally equalled but never surpassed. Segar's genius is insufficiently appreciated; it is lauded often enough but in a cheery *ad hominem* manner—but very few critics (and precious few fans) have read the entire corpus of Segar's output! Even the indefatigable Bill Blackbeard—whose San Francisco Academy of Comic Art is providing the bulk of raw material for the project—only recently assembled a complete run of the Segar *Popeye* series.

Astronaut Armstrong made references to Small First Steps quotable. The *NEMO Bookshelf Complete Segar Popeye* may not be small—eight volumes will encompass his marvelous output—but it is without doubt the first of many collections. In the future, when all the great strip artists and panel cartoonists have had their lifeworks collected and published, we will wonder at the days when only the literary novelists and humorists were on library and home shelves.

Stick with us. Soon we will all know why so many creators are worthy of such treatment; we will know from study, and not just reputations and meagre samplings.

We would like to add a feature to this page that illuminates some of the folks who make *NEMO* what it is. We are proud of our masthead list of contributors—the finest names in American comics appreciation and historiography—and, as issues unfold, you'll get to know them better in this corner.

Meet Our Contributors

It is fitting that our first introduction is to the men who have prepared the Carl Barks material for this issue. Indeed, Carl himself embodies just the type of career that *NEMO* is dedicated to celebrate: a genius of the first rank; wholly American in his self-effacing production; unselfconsciously producing work of lasting merit; and never fully appreciated during his active years. Two of the men most responsible for Carl's renaissance are Bruce Hamilton and Russ Cochran. Already they have embarked on projects in the comic-book realm that we mirror in the vision described in Part I of this editorial. Russ's *EC Library* is a landmark project and necessary component of a strip student's library. And the Disney projects—*The Fine Art of Carl Barks* and *The Carl Barks Library*—produced by their company, Another Rainbow, reflect the loving attention and superb production values that their subject deserves.

Bruce and Russ have long been involved in fandom and have consistently aimed at the higher values in artwork and appreciation; as an art dealer, Russ concentrates on finer pieces of certain artists and periods, and as a publisher and publicist Bruce devotes himself in absolutist fashion to that which he considers worthy. And we all are the luckier for it. We should mention John Clark, Byron Erickson, and Jay Willson of Another Rainbow, who are helping make it a major force in comics publishing and appreciation.

I cannot close this without a thanks to Walt Disney Productions itself for the assistance and approvals that have facilitated the providing of the Duck-and-Mouse material for this issue of *NEMO*. It will all appear soon in publications of Another Rainbow, and we at *NEMO* are grateful for the advance peeks, and for the genuine co-operation and generosity of the Disney Organization.

Richard Marschall

The Barkses (left) and Gottfredsons are flanked by (left to right, standing) Bruce Hamilton, Malcolm Willits, and Russ Cochran.

Wild Blue Yonder

Smilin' Jack? Forget the Story and Art . . . Here Was a Man Who Loved Drawing Comics!

ON THE WING
by ZACK MOSLEY
SOURE GAME LADS TO GO AHEAD WITH YOUR SOLOS AS YOU WERE ABOUT TO DO BEFORE BRUCE CRACKED UP--BUT IT'LL BE A LOT EASIER NOW THAN IF YOU PUT IT OFF----- WE'LL FLIP TO SEE WHO GOES FIRST.
HEADS I'LL GO.
TAILS.
IT'S TAILS! WELL, BUMPY, OLD PAL, HOP IN THE SHIP AND DO YOUR STUFF!
YEAH, THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT. JUST GET IN AND FLY IT AS YOU WOULD IF I WERE WITH YOU!
S-S-SURE I CAN FLY IT---
I'LL GO WITH YOU, BUMPY, IF YOU WANT ME TO!
I-I---I-- C-C-CAN'T DO IT.
CHEER UP, BUMPY
DON'T TAKE IT SO HARD, BUMPY. BEIN' ALL SET TO DO YOUR FIRST SOLO AN' THEN SEEIN' A BAD CRACK-UP IS LIABLE TO CHANGE ANYONE'S MIND.
COME ON, BUMPY, I'LL HELP YOU FLY IT!
W-W-WHAT'S TH' MATTER WITH ME?
NOTHIN' EXCEPT HE'S JUST PLAIN "YELLER."
LISTEN, DART BLACKSTONE YOU LAY OFF BUMPY, UNDERSTAND?
WHO'S YELLER ??
WELL, WELL, IF ONE OF THE BABY CHICKS AIN'T RUFFLIN' UP, ITS FEATHERS! TEN TO ONE YOU BACK DOWN TOO! I KNOW YOUR TYPE
IS THAT SO! WELL JUST SEE ABOUT THAT!
HERE-HERE!! BREAK IT UP-YOU TWO!
DON'T WORRY, BUMPY, YOU CAN FLY IT SOME OTHER TIME!
ATTA BOY MACK!
GEE THERE HE GOES-WHY COULDN'T I HAVE NERVE LIKE THAT?
AS MUCH AS I DREADED IT, I WAS GONNA DO THIS FIRST SOLO ANYWAY-BUT I WOULDN'T BACK OUT NOW FOR A MILLION BUCKS!! I'LL SHOW THAT GUY DART!
WELL I GUESS I'VE BEEN UP LONG ENOUGH--I'LL CIRCLE BACK AND LAND.
I GUESS THIS WILL SHOW DART BLACKSTONE WHETHER IM AFRAID TO FLY ALONE OR NOT!
WELL, STEVE OLD MAN, I DID IT!
GREAT, MACK, GREAT---FROM THE NICE WAY YOU HANDLED THAT SHIP YOU COULDN'T HAVE SPENT MUCH TIME THINKING ABOUT THE CRACK-UP!
WHAT CRACK-UP? --OH--WELL-I'LL BE ------, YOU KNOW I WAS SO SORE AT DART I NEVER THOUGHT OF IT ONCE!
HA-HA-HA THAT'S A GOOD ONE ON DART!
YOU DID SWELL MACK
SAY! BY THE WAY--WHERE ARE BUMPY AND DART? I WAS SO BUSY WATCHIN' YOU SOLO I DIDN'T SEE EITHER ONE OF THEM LEAVE-
THEY LEFT A WHILE AGO AND DART WAS STILL RAZZIN' BUMPY ABOUT BEIN' AFRAID-
HE WAS HUH? I'LL PUT A STOP TO THAT! WHICH WAY DID THEY GO?
CONTINUED NEXT WEEK

I KNOW MORE CUTE LI'L REDHEADS AND BLONDES THERE--I'D NEVER DIE OF A LONELY HEART IN WASHINGTON --THERE'S MYRTLE AN' FLORENCE AN' DAISY AN'--
AHEM-- DOWNWIND-- HAVE YOU GOT A LITTLE BLACK BOOK OF WASHINGTON PHONE NUMBERS?
HAVE I? WHAT LI'L DE-ICERS! WHAT TOOTSIE COOKIES!
YOU WANTA SELL IT?
OH, NO! NOT THIS BOOK!
AW, HAVE A HEART! I'LL BE IN WASHINGTON TONIGHT--AND I DON'T KNOW A SOUL-- BE A PAL!
SMACK!
WASHINGTON

All strips from collection of Rick Marschall

The Secret Saint of many and many a comic strip, it seems to me, was a, these days, insufficiently remembered, and, during his career, observed but insufficiently recognized figure, named Downwind Jaxon; who, for several decades, paraded before the public—on the daily and Sunday pages of Zack Mosley's *Smilin' Jack*—his permanently averted face. Wherever one's eyes were guided, in the, to be sure, often erratic thoroughfare of Zack Mosley's drawing, Downwind was going somewhere else. The boyishly chubby curves, forming an inverted Number 3, of cheek and chin, the tantalizing smudge of eyebrow at the supra-orbital ridge, the slicked-down blond back of his head, the backs of his various pullover sweaters: These made up the visual overnight baggage which this bemusingly diffident personage (especially since his personality, voiced in his dialogue, was so cockatoo-sporty and rakish) presented, or was condemned to, throughout his tenure. His occasional front views were always compromised by some intervention or other: the projecting strut of a plane, a billow of exhaust smoke; once in a great while, the hem of his own dialogue balloon, or someone else's, Mosley never being conspicuously inhibited by finicking questions of design.

by Donald Phelps

Downwind, during the very earliest days, thus made a reasonably presentable emblem of professional bustle, or Love-'em-and-Leave-'em mobility, the transitory crossways of existence, down on the Air Force base. But the playfulness of Zack Mosley simulated a grizzly bear's jolly roughhouse; and, for the considerable span of Downwind's career in the aviation strip, this airborne cocksman was veiled like unto a sultan's daughter. His devilish evasiveness was edged by the absence, until very late along, of any reference to the enigma within the strip itself; and the haunting (absurd as that adjective seems, it is, yes, absurdly appropriate here) uncertainty built up as to how intentional all this was; and exactly what Mosley's intentions were. Mosley's runaway caprice enlisted, amidst all the aeronautical humdrum of Jack's usual adventures, the giddy uncertainty which Richter (I think it was) captured in a *New Yorker* cartoon of the '30s, in which a "magician" is seen methodically scissoring someone's tuxedo. "Do you think he knows what he's doing," murmurs a member of the audience, "or is he just loaded?"

You were never quite sure, *a propos* Downwind, what you were supposed to be mystified about; and just what distinguished him, and Mosley's bizarre *coquetterie*, from the innumerable instances, among their comic strip fellows, of concealed faces and/or identities. In the autumn months of 1932, for example, Skeezix and his 10/11-year-old confederates were put on their collective mettle by a tough little boy called "Punk," whose back was resolutely, and formidably, turned toward the reader. The image-alert eye of Frank King (an artist, by the way, whose visual acuity and boldness have been chronically, and egregiously, underrated) saw in this the total metaphoric expression for a 12-year-old loner, a boy who had, as it were, turned his back upon the world. It was the central feature of a design, to which every other feature of Punk's bearing—the swagger hoist of his shoulders, the tilt of his cap, the arrogant brace of his neck—contributed, resulting in a composite face which no configuration of eyebrows, freckles, warts, and missing teeth could have effectively accomplished. For *this* face was the total design-expression of Frank King's intuitions and observations, and, in particular, his persistent curiosity about personal style, personal bearing, in quotidian American life. What has been withheld, or omitted, reinforces what is provided.

In similar terms, "The Blank"—that ambiguous vigilante who stalked the *Dick Tracy* strips for several months during 1937-8—presented his "true face" to the world in the shocking lozenge of dead space, surmounted by a black fedora, which Chester Gould—in one of his most audacious long-shot flirtations with caricature—invented for him initially. The Blank was, sure enough, ultimately brought to bay, and we were presented with a conventional, if horrendously battered, countenance, along with the skimpiest of covers for Gould's marvelous impudence: a flesh-colored, cheese-cloth mask, forsooth, which supposedly had given his fellow actors, at however close range, and readers as well, the illusion of awesome nullity. I would be surprised if one *Dick Tracy* reader in five hundred even deigned to spell out the mere physical improbabilities in this cheese-cloth improvisation of Gould's (whose inventions, to be sure, were usually mechanically valid, and carefully articulated). Nor did it matter: The metaphor had already carried the day. Might Gould have admitted, with that parlaying of candor and deviousness which informed the style of *Dick Tracy* at its apogee, that he *drew a blank* on the furnishing of a face for a criminal

PREVIOUS PAGE: The very first *Smilin' Jack* Sunday page, when the feature was called *On the Wing* and Jack was Mack. The artist was Zack . . . (1934)

engaged exclusively in the extermination of other criminals? How to provide a mask, when one's artistic practice has specialized in faces which are, themselves, masks? When he had enlisted conventional masks before at any length, in the single, spectacular instance of the '36/'37 Purple Cross Gang, Gould used hoods, imprinted with a purple Maltese cross on the foreheads, which became, as it were, surrogate faces in themselves, and—in the instance of the burly chief, Number One—conveyed the effect of a gross, menacing lizard. But in the Blank, Gould touched the chill outpost of abstraction itself, the *stillness* of invention: design which has passed the borders of the articulate, of that which defines design. He was doing, less flagrantly, less impishly, and under a conventional narrative guise, what he had almost done many years before, in an instance noted by Stephen Becker in *Comic Art in America*. Having immersed Tracy in a seemingly hopeless mine cave-in, Gould resorted at last to drawing his own hand, alleviating the situation. He was discouraged from this maneuver, Becker tells us, by the pragmatically astute Joseph Medill Patterson, his publisher; but throughout his career the vulnerability of his invention haunts Gould's style, as does the bewitching availability of caricature's plastic license.

I have stressed *design* throughout these illustrations the better to emphasize what made so bedeviling Downwind Jaxon's running competition with the girl on the Old Dutch Cleanser can: that he, or rather, that Zack Mosley's scapegrace handling of him, seemed to embody the dismissal of design. Downwind was not a secret agent of any kind, to the extent that his anonymity was a part of his character (he and Jack worked together on various undercover details during World War II, but usually without recourse to disguise). In any case, what would be the point of exhibiting his face to everyone save the reader? There was no indication of his being grievously deformed, or disfigured; no grimaces or gestures of recoil are ever forthcoming from bystanders when Downwind walks on the scene, nor any behind-hand references to crackups or fires. Nor, on the other hand, despite Downwind's *ad nauseam* accounts of conquests of his "li'l de-icers," do I think he was supposed to be safeguarding our eyes from the sunburst braces of a twin-engine Apollo.

The devilish piquancy of Downwind's dodging lay, it seems to me, not with Downwind himself—that is, not with any possible *images* with which his elusive visage presented us (this mysterious aspect is also what made him different from any of the more beguiling hidden villains or heroes of our childhood, even unto The Octopus of Will Eisner's *The Spirit* with his enticing suggestion of the stage magician in his white-gloved hands). No, the will-o'-the-wisp beguilement, such as it ever was, of Downwind Jaxon danced, I think, to the hints about Zack Mosley—his anxieties, his boyish euphoria, his reckless engagements of his own limitations—which the "appearances" of Downwind provided, piecemeal. You became increasingly aware, following Downwind in that shadowy pursuit, that Zack Mosley could *never* possibly bring his face before our eyes, that Downwind's not-going-our-way countenance had come to symbolize the breaking by Zack Mosley of the sound barrier; aware of his own not-inconsiderable limitations, which he was here casting into the balance, in this preposterous, increasingly self-obsessive and self-mocking chase of the mesmerisingly erratic blips on the radar, aware of the confidently glowing garbage-can-lid shape in the middle distance; aware of something which had commenced its life as an emblem, a news-sheet's thinness separating it from abstraction—the figure of the man-always-headed-somewhere else. In this figure's behalf, in behalf of its persistence in the narrative, Mosley pitched all the vertiginous waywardness, all the collapsible gracelessness, of *Smilin Jack* as a whole.

Possibly the ultimate *Smilin' Jack* vignette: planes, dames, slang, and symbolism . . .

Those figures seem, even in the most compositionally normal situations, as erratically placed as decals on a kid's arm, with faces that might be turned toward the characters they are confronting, or toward the Wild Blue Yonder itself; the hodge-podge plots seems to suggest a scrapbook-page of clippings from current pulp-fiction, rejected Warner Brothers' screenplays, and the most glisteningly detailed airborne journalism; that which the usually gentle Coulton Waugh, in his pioneering *The Comics*, was constrained to call "the hair-raising perspective, so near, yet so far from, reality."

And, as against all this—or rather buoying and keeping this fearfully-listing craft on some now-and-then intelligible course—we have the chartless, careening enthusiasm, simply, as it seems, for the very act of *doing* a comic strip. *Smilin' Jack*, collapse wherever else it may, stands among the very few daily comic strips to reflect consistently such positive zest in their execution; and a sense of the entire comic strip terrain as eternally inchoate, and, in effect, boundless.

Was it the permeative sense, perhaps, of Mosley's vocation as a pilot? I'd suggest an authenticity of feeling which outstripped among *Smilin' Jack's* fans (including my eight-to-eleven-year-old self) all the crazily askew traits, the drawing's gracelessness, the dashing haphazardness of the story line, and most of the other component lines. That seat-of-the-pants-guided drawing, I might add, has

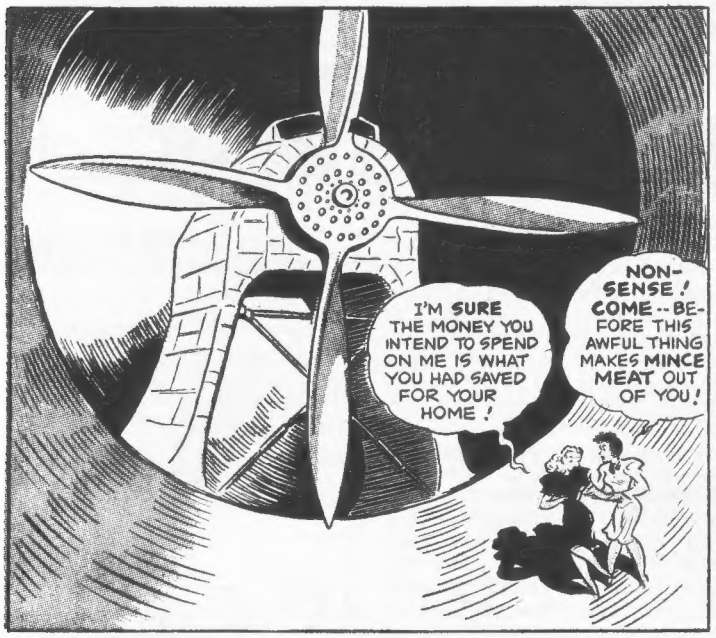
(continued on page 10)

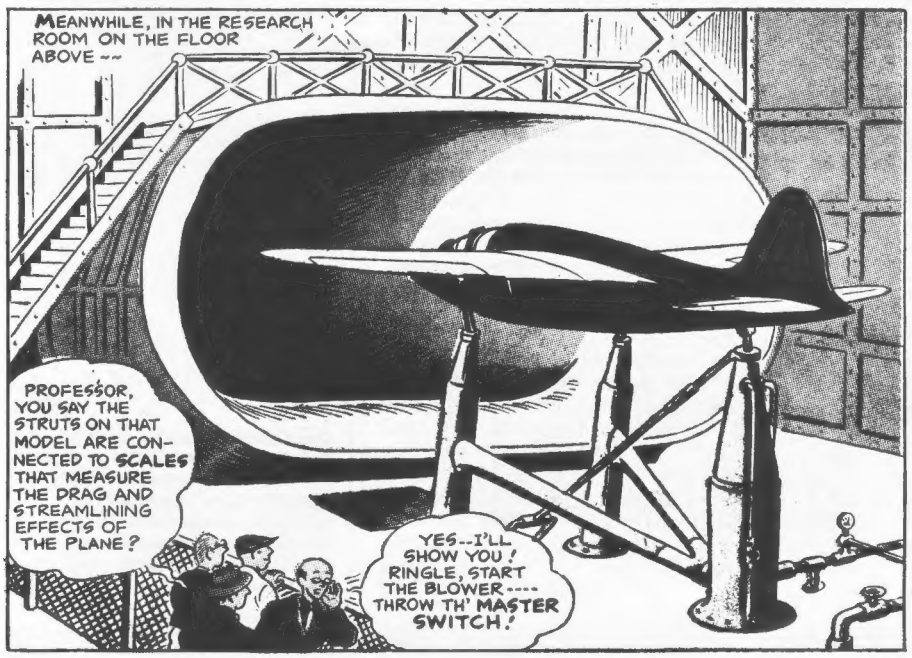
OVERLEAF: Two pages from a classic sequence featuring exaggerated characterizations, sexy girls, the most improbable of premises, a hamhanded cliff-hanger . . . a visceral feast of pleasures by an artist having fun doing comics.

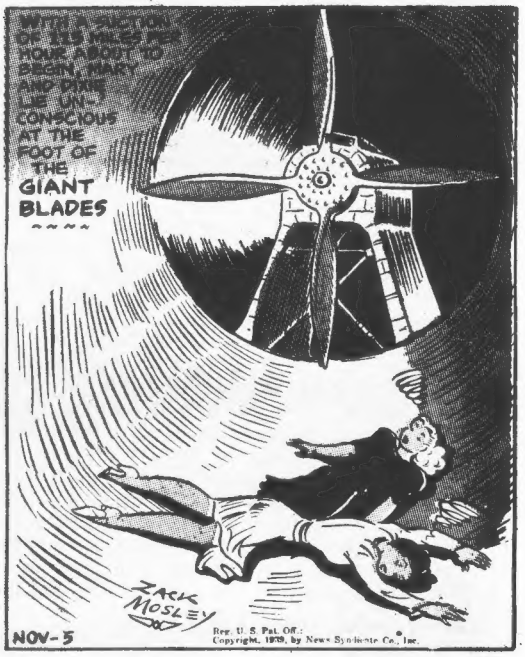
MARY JACK

WHILE MARY AND JACK WERE IN A WEATHER OFFICE, DIXIE, HAVING LEARNED SHE WAS BEING TAKEN TO A SPECIALIST, SCRAMBLED OUT OF THE PLANE AND GROPED HER WAY BEHIND THE HANGARS--
DANGER
WIND TUNNEL
EMERGENCY DOOR
OH--- HERE'S A DOOR-- AN' TH' LOCK ISN'T SNAPPED--- MAYBE I CAN HIDE HERE!

MARY DISCOVERED DIXIE MISSING, AND WHILE SEARCHING FOR HER FOUND THE OPEN DOOR AND DIXIE ~~
-- BUT, DIXIE, YOU ARE IN A TUNNEL WHERE THEY MAKE WIND FOR TESTING PLANES-- --IF IT SHOULD START YOU'D BE SUCKED UP INTO THOSE BLADES AND GROUND ALIVE!!
THAT'S A CLEVER STORY, MARY-- BUT I WON'T FALL FOR IT--YOU'RE JUS' TRYING TO SCARE ME INTO GOING WITH YOU!


I'M SURE THE MONEY YOU INTEND TO SPEND ON ME IS WHAT YOU HAD SAVED FOR YOUR HOME!
NON-SENSE! COME-- BE-FORE THIS AWFUL THING MAKES MINCE MEAT OUT OF YOU!


MEANWHILE, IN THE RESEARCH ROOM ON THE FLOOR ABOVE ~~
PROFESSOR, YOU SAY THE STRUTS ON THAT MODEL ARE CONNECTED TO SCALES THAT MEASURE THE DRAG AND STREAMLINING EFFECTS OF THE PLANE?
YES--I'LL SHOW YOU! RINGLE, START THE BLOWER---- THROW TH' MASTER SWITCH!



Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.
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JACK
JACK FOUND MARY AND PIXIE UNCONSCIOUS IN THE WIND TUNNEL--AT THAT INSTANT THE GIANT PROPELLER STARTED, BUT BEFORE THEY COULD BE SUCKED-UP INTO IT, JACK LOCKED HIS LEGS AROUND A STEAM PIPE THAT RUNS THROUGH ONE SIDE OF THE TUNNEL
PAINFULLY JACK HANGS ON--BUT THE SUCTION IS SO GREAT, BOTH GIRLS ARE ABOUT TO BE PULLED FROM HIS ARMS --HE HAS ONLY ENOUGH STRENGTH TO HOLD ONE GIRL--
MEAN-WHILE, AT JERKWATER--
BY TH' WAY, FAT STUFF-- WHERE IS JACK ?
HIM AND MARY WENT ON TRIP TO TAKE-UM DIXIE TO A SPECIALIST!
IT'S TOO BAD THAT HEEL, DIXIE, TURNED UP JUST AS JACK AND THAT SWEET KID, MARY, WERE ABOUT TO BE MARRIED!
DIXIE'S OKAY--BESIDES, SHE WAS JACK'S FIRST LOVE--AN' NOW THAT SHE'S BLIND, DIXIE NEEDS JACK!
MARY'S YOUNG-- PRETTY---SWEET-- SHE'S TH' GIRL FOR JACK--- -- BESIDES, DIXIE'S BEEN MARRIED!
SO WHAT ? SO HAVE SOME OF OUR BEST PEOPLE!
WELL, TH' FACT IS--DIXIE AND MARY ARE BOTH SUCH SWEET KIDS MAYBE JACK LOVES BOTH!
YES, UNDER TH' CIRCUMSTANCES, JACK COULD EASILY THINK HE LOVES BOTH!
SURE, BUT IF IT EVER CAME TO A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH, WHERE A GUY HAD TO CHOOSE BETWEEN TWO GIRLS, HE'D KNOW IN A SECOND WHICH HE LOVED!!
ZZZZ
Reg. U. S. Pat. Off.
Copyright, 1939, by News Syndicate Co., Inc.
I CAN'T HANG ON TO BOTH ANY LONGER--I MUST LET EITHER DIXIE OR MARY GO AND BE GROUND TO DEATH ---WHICH ONE WILL IT BE ?
ZACK MOSLEY
NOV-12-

ABOVE: Zack Mosley in 1934, when he created his aviation strip *On The Wing*, with its original cast, described thus in promotion: "Mack—our hero, the young chap who is learning to fly; Steve—the flying instructor, a thoroughly good scout who will win the heart of every boy; Pinfeathers—the ubiquitous kid found around every airport, hero-worshipper and hanger-on; Dart—the villain of the piece. See them mustaches? A good flyer, but nasty and unpopular." This strip's lack of success caused the transformation to the rougher, faster-paced *Smilin' Jack*.

(continued from page 7)

its own point to make, in terms of Mosley's rapport with his readers; not on the simple-minded premise that crayon-wielding amateurs were thus encouraged to feel: "Gee, *I* can draw that good!" but, not unrelated to it: the sheer participation in the *act* of drawing, whereby the line is the feedline of that daily expressive action which, beyond creativity itself, defines any comic strip. Besides, in combination with the siftings of data about airplanes and the peradventures of flight which occupied more of the foreground in the 1930s than later on, the drawing's rudimentary catch-as-catch-can look carried some of the "genuineness," the expeditious roughness, of the sketches in travel journals, or in the margins of logs. Like the drawing in the "superhero" comic books of the '30s—*The Torch, The Flash, Submariner*, the earliest *Batman*, alongside which the drawing of *Smilin' Jack* seems the finishing touch in urbane professionalism—Mosley's line is not an end in itself, but a reliable, if makeshift, guide through those amorphous possibilities of "just drawing" which most children know better than anyone else.

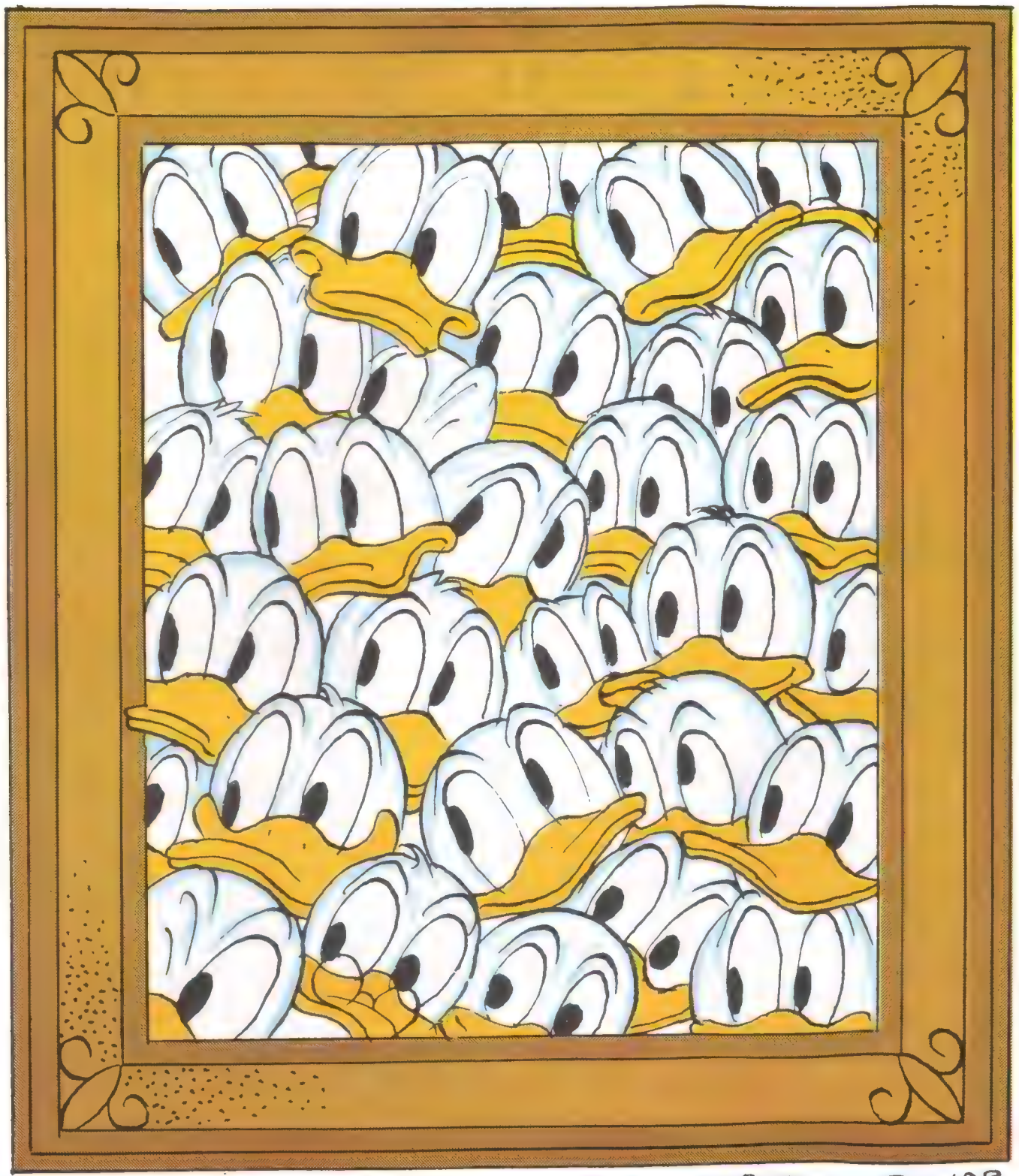
Downwind is not an organic image of anything, as are the Blank and young Punk. There is no suggestive yeast nested in his presence. He is a salute, a self-salute if you will, to all the imbalances, all the infractions of proportion, the sense of design's perishability before the winds of nature, occasion and luck which piloted Zack Mosley's work the considerable length of his comic-strip career. He is a walking long-shot who bore witness to his author's faith in everything caprice-prone and fluttery and generally unlikely about comic-strip expression itself. His averted face is peering toward that always challenging, always extendable space which was continually scanned by Mosley's contemporaries and antecedents: the possibility, the *prospect*, of comic-strip form and style, not as the exercises in foregone conclusion which they have lately become in the tiny co-op cubicles occupying today's comic-strip pages, but, rather, as vehicles for the scouting, animal-keen observation, the on-the-spot invention, the ever-recurrent nudges and tweaks of creative uncertainty along with, and sustained by, the graven idiosyncrasies depicted in various idioms of craft. All such made the American comic strip, at its expressive best, something next to impossible to monitor in its comings and goings, much less define justly, without the most earnest fusion of vigilance and flexibility and love. Further, the comic strip is well-nigh impossible to define, or assess, by any of the canons of traditional European art, or from any of the attitudes which, residually, those canons have nurtured in this country for decades.

The spirit of Downwind Jaxon, and of very much native American art, is enshrined after a fashion by Philip Guston in two paintings: one, of a hefty, stolid back turned toward the viewer, overcast with that somewhat unhealthy ruddiness of so many Guston paintings; and the other of the artist himself: white hair in elevation from behind his easel, which downwinds his face; seen amidst a wasteland of large insects on safari; of squashed paint-tubes and brushes; of lifelike debris, and persistent, irrationally, non-esthetic life; a wafer-white moon, in the upper left-hand corner, suggesting, somehow, that, were the easel removed, one would see only another portion of the crawling, bristling, skittering terrain; not submerging, but trafficking with, and through, the artist's persona.

But, from very much closer to home, we can consider another tract of territory—a theater, in fact—which courted, and yearned for, and established itself around that bedevilingly suggestive space, that protean Yonder, to which Downwind Jaxon paid prayerful tribute. A theater which never forgot it was a theater, during the lifetime of its director and stage manager, and so maintained a more teasingly, more hauntingly direct contact with actuality, despite its rudimentary look, than the most detail-brocaded illustrative art among its contemporaries. A theater of burlesque and two-a-day vaudeville, at once as offhandedly humble and as bellicosely confident about its right to enlist, to demand, its audience's investment of imagination as any theater could be; which, in its most drastic *buffo* moments, kept in view somehow the salients of human existence's most raw and poignant and terrible necessities and manias. A theater which long ago, perhaps before its inception, cast its fourth wall out upon the snoring, dream-vexed sea, which thus became its extension. And never, throughout its original stage manager's life at any rate, would own up to its secret; but, craftily and prudently and humbly, kept its dinky, foreground-lodged dimensions: the dimensions of something small, handy, and pliable, a tool such as a theater of self-elected modest means can always appreciate. A thimble. Thimble Theater. **n**

A NEMO Exclusive:

The Carl Barks Tribute...



1984 Walt Disney Productions

Barks and Gottfredson Meet

Two Disney Legends Share Their Memories

Last year, on Walt Disney's birthday, a mixed group of fans, publishers, and Disney artists met in Los Angeles to honor Walt. . . and the two honored guests that evening, Carl Barks and Floyd Gottfredson. The pre-eminent Duck and Mouse artists, respectively, met and talked before the microphone for the first time. Following is their conversation, conducted by members of the Disney art publisher, Another Rainbow. Nemo is happy to be celebrating Donald Duck's 50th birthday in this special issue.

Floyd Gottfredson, left, and Carl Barks in a display room at the Disney Archives with Archivist David Smith, right.

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A.R.: *Newspaper syndicates and comic book publishers have usually—or at least often—had an official age level they aimed their material to reach. Did either of you at a conscious level try to reach a more mature audience? Floyd?*
Gottfredson: The level newspaper editors tried to put on the readers was around twelve years. We never did believe that. We felt that most of the children now *are* adults through exposure to radio and television and so on, so we never bothered to point at anything except the adult level. That was always my feeling.
A.R.: *What about the comic books, Carl? Didn't they have a lower-aged audience they wanted you to write down to?*
Barks: I know I was *supposed* to aim at about the 12-year-old level; however, my opinion of a 12-year-old's intelligence was far higher than what the editors expected of a 12-year-old.
A.R.: *Lewis Carroll was said to have written his stories so that anyone could read them at his own level of intelligence. Did you intend to do that?*
Barks: It happened it came out that way, not that I ever thought it would. But it did come out that way, as it's been proven by the way the fans react.
A.R.: *Floyd, would you have been comfortable working in comic books rather than on daily and Sunday comic strips?*
Gottfredson: No, I don't think so. But it was more a matter of habit, just the way we had become accustomed to working. There's just no way I could have seen the Mickey continuity in that sort of form.
A.R.: *What about the Donald Duck stories, Carl? Would you have liked doing their adventures in a newspaper strip format?*
Barks: No, because my stories had to have a continuous reading. That is, you pick up a story and you read it for 20 minutes or so. A daily you read for 15 seconds and you've finished.
Gottfredson: You throw it away, and that's it!
A.R.: *Did either of you have a method or a gimmick to get an idea when you were going through a dry spell?*
Barks: I would first think, what do I want to draw? Would I like to draw a sea story? Or would I like to draw a cowboy story, or a desert story? Once I thought of what I *wanted* to draw, I'd be halfway to the point of thinking of an idea.
Gottfredson: That's exactly the way I felt, always first what I wanted to draw.
Barks: When I first started noticing the *Mickey Mouse* strip, which was running in the *Minneapolis Tribune*, I think you leaned toward western adventures. You had stagecoach robberies, rubber-legged horses and so on. Very funny stuff.
A.R.: *Donald Duck was not as one-dimensional or two-dimensional in the comic books as the studios may have envisioned him in the cartoons.*
Barks: I figured he was an actor. He could be adapted to any role that I wrote for him. He could be a Shakespearean writer or he could be a coward. He could be anything but a thief and a murderer.
A.R.: *Mickey Mouse, on the other hand, was almost from the beginning a heroic little fighter. Floyd, how would you describe Mickey's shortcomings? Did he have any character quirks?*
Gottfredson: I'm not aware of any character quirks. He did what he needed to under the circumstances, whatever the circumstances. He would be just what he had to be to do whatever he had to do.
A.R.: *You both drew long adventures and you did short one-page or daily strip gags. Which did you enjoy the most?*
Gottfredson: I enjoyed the adventures more, trying to keep them as humorous as possible. I never would have wanted to do straight adventure, but also straight gags were too thin—no background or meat to them.
A.R.: *Carl, did you enjoy doing the filler gags as much as all those long adventures?*
Barks: No, I didn't enjoy doing them. I felt they were so much work for so little accomplishment and so little pay.
A.R.: *Suppose you had had some sort of crystal ball back in the 1930s and had been told that all these* Mickey Mouse *stories are going to be continuously reprinted as classics later on. Is there anything you would have done differently?*
Gottfredson: I don't think so. You had a story to do, and you did it.
Barks: I don't know . . . I'm afraid I would have become scared, gotten stage fright and probably tightened up (the *Donald Duck* stories) and over-indulged them with my writing and lost everything.
A.R.: *What period, Carl, do you think you were doing your best stuff?*
Barks: The best art I was doing was in the 1960s. Possibly the best stories were in the late 1940s, early 1950s. But my drawing improved and my line technique improved right up until almost the time I quit. In fact, maybe my last story was as good as anything I ever did in line drawing.
A.R.: *Floyd, what do you think were your key periods?*
Gottfredson: I think as far as drawing was concerned, the same as Carl. It's an evolutionary thing. It just kept improving all the time, and I liked the changes in the characters, too, especially Mickey. As far as the writing was concerned, I thought the continuity was the best. When the strip went back to a gag a day it was a step back in my opinion, and this was proved by the popularity of the strip.
(Editor's note: Earlier in the interview Gottfredson explained that when the strip dropped the continuity in 1956 for daily gags, readership and popularity rapidly declined.)
A.R.: *What was your best period in plotting and ideas?*
Gottfredson: Right up till '43, I would say. That's when Bill Walsh took over. From then on I didn't have anything to do with the plotting or writing. In my opinion he was the greatest writer we ever had. But this opinion wasn't shared by the readers. They didn't like his stuff for some reason.
Barks: Can I ask a question? Who wrote the story in which there was a little guy from Mars with a funny little nose? He was a kind of comic villain. He was so much more clever than Mickey; he was always making Mickey look like a dunce.
Gottfredson: That was Bill Walsh. Typical of his stuff.
Barks: I didn't like that little villain, that type of thing, as much as I did Black Pete or Squinch.
Gottfredson: The readers didn't generally, either, for some reason. I never could analyze why they didn't.
A.R.: *What were your feelings about the idea of animals that talked and acted like humans but that had other animals as pets? Did that ever make you uncomfortable?*
Barks: Yes, to the extent that I didn't have ducks in Donald's back yard, or have him going out shooting ducks or doing anything in which a real, live natural duck would be in the same story with him. But as for dogs, wolves, lions or other animals, he could handle them the same as a human would handle them.
Gottfredson: Same thing here. We just never gave any thought to it.
A.R.: *We'd like to ask the two of you about influences on your art and your lives. What comic strips impressed you during your formative years? Carl?*
Barks: It was the *Mickey Mouse* strip that *he* did that influenced my drawing more than anything else. (Points to Gottfredson.)
Gottfredson: That's amazing! (*Laughs*) I'm very flattered.
Barks: Other artists' work was *Buz Sawyer, Prince Valiant, Popeye* . . . a whole bunch of them. As for humor and the story side of it, I would say it was *Popeye, Barney Google* . . . a whole bunch of those newspaper strips from years ago. While I didn't ever do that type of humor very much, at least they planted seeds in my head, so that I formed plots and saw gags in ways that had been implanted in me subconsciously from these guys' work . . . and in the way you build up to a climax. It always helped.
Gottfredson: We had an interesting teacher at the studio for a while for seminars. He taught students how to build climaxes, writing movie scripts with peaks and valleys. You build up to a small peak and then you quickly go down into a valley, and then build to a higher peak and so on; finally you reach the ultimate peak—the climactic peak—and then you chop it right off. And that's the end of it.
Barks: Yes. I got into some of those story sessions.
Gottfredson: That's the way I tried to think when I wrote the continuities. We built them the same way.
Barks: I remember Jack King and Harry Reeves laughed at that guy and his theories, yet they were doing stories the way he taught 'em to. They were doing it out of nature: it was their

nature to make the stories that way.

A.R.: *Floyd, wasn't one of the big influences on the* Mickey Mouse *strip Sidney Smith and* The Gumps?

Gottfredson: None of the cartoon-type comic strips were done with continuities before *The Gumps*. It was such a big hit—such a big success overnight—that all the syndicates asked all their cartoonists to go into continuities. That's why we did. Walt was writing the strip at the time. He'd been writing it for about three and a half months, I guess, and King Features asked us to turn it into a continuity type, so he started the Way Out West story and I picked it up from there. Walt kept trying to get the guy who was drawing the strip at the time to take over the writing, but because he had too many other things to do, he couldn't take the time. When I first went into the studio Walt asked me what my favorite type of cartooning was and I said the comic strip! He said, "You don't want to get into that, it's a rat race. There's no future in it. Animation is where it is." So I said, okay, I'd got into animation . . . and I went in as an in-betweener and started training. I'd been at it about four months, I guess, when Win Smith, who was drawing the strip, came stomping up to my desk one day and he said, "Well, I guess you've got a new job!" I said, "Why's that?" And he said, "I just quit." I asked, "Why would you do that?" And he said, "No blankety-blank young whippersnapper's going to tell me what to do!" So, he walked into oblivion. And the young whippersnapper, of course, was Walt Disney! (*Laughter*) Walt called me into his office and asked me to take the strip over, but I replied, "I think you were right. I've come to like animation. I'd like to stay in it." He said, "Well, take it over for two weeks while I find someone." A month after I took it over I began to wonder if he was actually looking for anyone and after about two months I began to worry for fear that he was, because I'd gotten into it. And I was still with it 45 and a half years later.

A.R.: *What was the first published cartoon you can recall that you did?*

Gottfredson: I did a series of cartoons which I gave to the *Salt Lake City Telegraph* called "This is Life and So is Salt Lake," or some corny title like that. I drew a large panel once a week and they were the first things I had published.

Barks: Where were you living at that time?

Gottfredson: Utah. Down in central Utah. And then I came our here.

A.R.: *Carl, are there any political cartoonists you recall that influenced or impressed you in the early days?*

Barks: Ahh, yes. Dorman H. Smith.

Gottfredson: Of course. The best of them all.

Barks: Yeah.

Gottfredson: Absolutely.

A.R.: *What about his stuff did you like?*

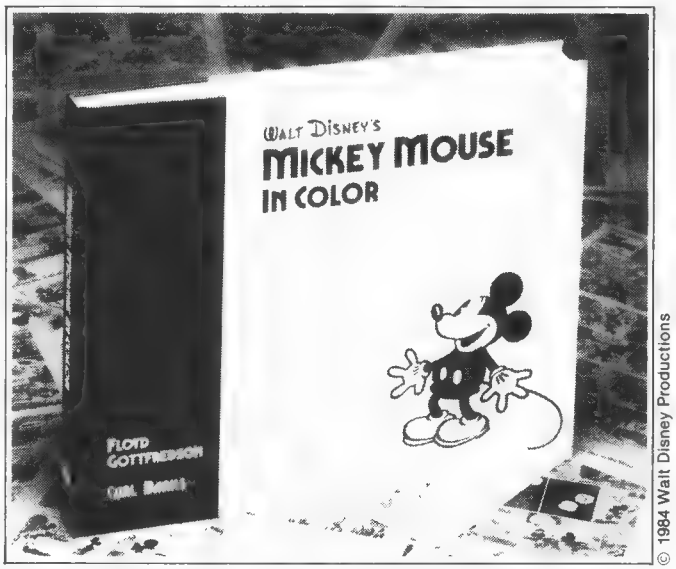
Barks: The Disney style. His stuff was very much like Floyd's and the Disney style.

Gottfredson: He influenced me so much that I probably got more from him . . .

Barks: His accented curve lines, and so on . . .

One of the four drawings sent by Carl Barks to the Disney Studios that resulted in his being offered a job. It was drawn and sent from his home in Minneapolis.

Gottfredson: He was a very powerful and amusing humorist. I met him when he came to the studio one day. He was a very, very shy fellow. He was very tall and he stammered a little bit. He was a friend of Ben Sharpsteen. He knew Ben and he started out on the same paper Ben did up in Oakland and went on from there. He was tops, there's no doubt about it.
Barks: There's never been another one come anywheres near him.
A.R.: *Carl, did you ever have aspirations to do a comic strip?*
Barks: Oh, I tried. My inspirations to do a comic strip would only last a very short period of time. Somehow, I would get tired of my own ideas before I ever got far enough along that I would have anything to market. I'd probably do four or five strips in a sequence and then I would begin to look at them and pick them to pieces and find fault. Pretty soon I wouldn't even do any more on that subject.
Gottfredson: You can't do that or you'd never do anything.
Barks: I realized that. As I look at the modern comic strips I realize that I was much too critical.
Gottfredson: I don't know how these modern strips ever got marketed.
A.R.: *Going clear back to school, do either of you remember being influenced by an old teacher?*
Barks: I had no teachers.
Gottfredson: Mine was all correspondence, so I had no teachers, either.
A.R.: *What about philosophers?*
Barks: I went through the eighth grade in a little country schoolhouse, and, I tell you, I saw no books on philosophy. I didn't even know what the word meant.
Gottfredson: I was the same way. That's as far as it went.
A.R.: *What were your reactions to George Herriman and* Krazy Kat?
Barks: That was something I could never understand, the humor of *Krazy Kat*. But there were some funny-looking characters. I used to read it just to see the crazy characters. You could get a laugh out of it . . . just the ridiculousness of what he would put on a piece of paper.
Gottfredson: Well, to me, he was a genius of all geniuses; a comic strip genius. His conversations, his dialog, his concepts, his drawing. . . the drawing was especially beautiful: practically paintings in my opinion. And the way that Kat talked! Today I find myself being influenced by him.
A.R.: *What about* Little Nemo *and Winsor McCay's work?*
Gottfredson: Remarkable architecturally-designed drawings. Nobody's ever equalled him since. But after you've seen a few of them, they begin to pall on you, because they were just too much to digest when you looked at them.
A.R.: *What about Frank Frazetta?*
Barks: A great man. Great artist. It seems to me he can do darn near anything. I don't know what he could do in the way of humor, though.
Gottfredson: No, I doubt that he could.
Barks: I don't think I've ever seen anything of his that was very funny. I did see some paintings of his where a bunch of girls were being taken out of a stag party or something and hauled off to jail in a paddy wagon. It was funny. Could he have done a funny comic? I doubt it.
Gottfredson: I doubt that, too.
Barks: He could have done a strip very much like *Captain Easy* or *Prince Valiant* or something on that order. I believe he could have done it.
A.R.: *In an earlier conversation we were talking about* Tarzan *and Hal Foster and his great talents. What do you think of the entirely different style of Burne Hogarth's* Tarzan?
Barks: I loved Hogarth's *Tarzan*. There, too, was a style of drawing that had quite a bit of Disney in it.
Gottfredson: Yes, very strong.
Barks: The accented curves!
Gottfredson: He doesn't come up near Foster. Probably second to him, I'd say.
Barks: Hogarth's stuff was too anatomical. He didn't have the soul, the soul that can show through the anatomy.
Gottfredson: It was all through Foster's stuff.
Barks: Oh, yeah.



Cover of the forthcoming *Mickey Mouse* volume from Another Rainbow.

A.R.: *Of course, Foster is often compared with Alex Raymond.*
Gottfredson: Yeah.
A.R.: *What about Raymond?*
Barks: There was a man who could combine craftsmanship with emotions and all the gimmicks that went into a good adventure strip. He was a master.
Gottfredson: He really was.
A.R.: *What about Milton Caniff?*
Gottfredson: Tops. He was number one, always has been. He isn't anywhere near now what he used to be, but he was by far the best in that type of thing, in my opinion.
Barks: I liked his drawing up to a point. It seemed to me he began putting too much ink into his stuff after he reached a certain point in which his composition should have been clear. He started putting much more ink into it. I would just lose track of where the characters were.
Gottfredson: That's happened since he quit penciling his own stuff, I think. It isn't anywhere near the quality that used to be there when he did his own stuff, because you would look at it in the early days and—BANG!—you'd see everything in the order that you should.
Barks: Well, really, I never took papers that had Caniff's stuff in them for long enough for me to really get familiar with his style. It's just that now and then I would happen to live in a place where I could get a paper that carried his strips and always after a short period I'd begin to think I wish he'd put in a long-shot once in a while, so I could tell where these people are. You're lost in all this ink.
A.R.: *Do you think editors should listen to isolated complaints from someone or some group that's been offended by something that's been published, or should they use their own judgment in setting new editorial policies?*
Barks: They should use their own better judgment, certainly, because some people have very tender skins and they can get offended by things that the great majority of people wouldn't even notice. And an editor—in order to be an editor—has to probably have a sense of what the general public likes.
A.R.: *Isn't it really true that most humor is either based on human foibles or on stereotypes of one kind or another? If people recognize and identify with these things, are offended, and demand they cease, aren't they risking destroying much of what is funny in strips?*
Barks: They destroy a great many gags. So much humor is based on, like you say, human foibles or certain types of human behavior that becomes very funny when it is pointed at over and over.
Gottfredson: It's ridiculous for them to pay that much attention to isolated complaints. **n**

The Joyous Season

by Geoffrey Blum

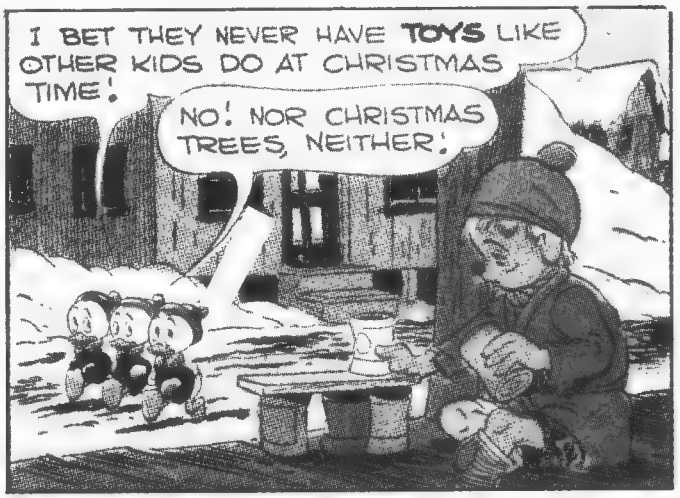
Knowing the approximate dates his stories would be published, Carl Barks fit them to times of the year, often by invoking national holidays. Assuming that he was writing mainly for children, he chose big, showy festivals in which boys and girls are traditionally encouraged to take part: Easter, Hallowe'en, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.

There are, however, few memorable Barks stories about Easter. Over the years he must have discovered that one can do only so much with Easter parades and egg hunts. The really significant traditions attendant on this holiday are religious. Small children would not have found them very entertaining, and wary editors would have shied away from including them in a comic book. Thanksgiving must have posed a similar problem. There are just so many gags you can squeeze from the annual challenge of procuring and cooking a turkey; the historic background of the day would have been of interest to boys and girls only as part of a lesson or school pageant.

Hallowe'en has more potential for comic-book treatment. Party disguises and the trick-or-treat custom lend themselves to jokes, and there is a fascination in running around your neighborhood in the dark while grown-ups unprotestingly fill your bag with candy. Yet this holiday is not an event on which children dwell. It's a lark to be taken advantage of once a year, and the youngest may even get a delicious fright or two from it; but most children realize from the outset that the holiday (at least as we observe it today) is a glorious sham. They have watched their mothers make masks and costumes; they know that the witches and goblins they meet are only make-believe, children in disguise like themselves. Not surprisingly, Barks wrote few Hallowe'en stories.

Christmas is a reindeer of a different color. For children it is very special, partly because they hope to glut themselves on presents. More importantly, Christmas evokes from them a degree of belief which they give to no other holiday. Until you reach a certain age, Santa Claus is real. Grown-ups—even parents—take him seriously, participating in tree-trimming and present-buying with a fury they accord no other festival. Only strong magic can take possession of the child's imagination and the adult's will. Christmas is by far the biggest holiday for everyone; and it is the one about which Barks wrote some of his most exciting and provocative stories.

Barks's earliest Christmas tales were short fables written for the *Firestone* giveaway comics. They present embryo themes to which he would later return: greed and charity, and the obsession with gifts which grows from these opposing states of mind. Barks's classic Christmas stories, rich tapestries of conflicting attitude, are ambiguous in their approach to these issues; but the *Firestone* fables contain only simple moral lessons—often painfully obvious ones.



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In the first of these stories, which appeared in 1945, the Ducks are given shelter from the cold by an impoverished widow and her two small children. Donald, blind to the hardships of those around him, can only bellyache: "Here I gotta drink warm milk when I coulda been home wallowing in piles of chocolates and coconut cashews! This is the *worst* Christmas Eve I ever spent!"

The widow's children, by contrast, are little angels and an example to us all. Faced with the prospect of making their Christmas dinner on a lone can of squash, they beam, "It's good! We'll close our eyes and pretend it's *turkey*!" Christmas, we learn, is a state of mind; and the lesson is not lost on Huey, Dewey, and Louie. In an excess of shame and charity—emotions which are seldom separate in Barks's stories—the nephews give their own turkey and presents to the needy family. On returning home, they find themselves magically rewarded: Grandma Duck has preceded them with food and presents for all.

Even the title of this story, "Donald Duck's Best Christmas," implies a moral: The very nicest Christmases are the ones on which we give freely and generously to others. The *Firestone* giveaway stories for 1947 and 1949 teach similar lessons, with the stigma of shame a lurking threat for those who remain selfish. "Don't expect any new coaster wagons and so forth till *these* are worn out!" Donald rails at the boys in "New Toys" (1949). "I'm ashamed of your *greed*."

One other early story stands out as a curious but significant anomaly. In August 1945, Barks drew a ten-page tale in which Donald, obsessed with the notion of spreading Christmas cheer, insisted on inflicting his raucous carols on Neighbor Jones. Jones retaliated viciously, and the editors at Western Publishing chose not to print the story. What place have anger and violence in a Christmas tale?

To judge by later stories, it seems that they have a very real place, and it is to Barks's credit that he recognized their ugly presence beneath the jingle bells and mistletoe, and attempted to come to terms with *all* the sentiments of the season. His mistake in the Neighbor Jones story was to concentrate on violent sight gags to the exclusion of holiday joy or any ennobling emotion. The story ends with Donald appropriately but severly punished for forcing his carols on others. Brandishing an electric cattle-prod, Jones stands over him and compels the duck to sing himself hoarse.

WOE IS ME! OH, WOE! WOE! WOE!
WE WANT A CHRISTMAS TREE!
BAW!
SOB! SOB!
HOW ABOUT A PURPLE TREE WITH WHITE BARK?
PURPLE! FOR A CHRISTMAS TREE! YOU MAKE ME SICK!
YOU'LL GET LOBSTER NEWBURG AND LIKE IT! WHO DO YOU THINK IS PAYING FOR THIS— ME?
CHRISTMAS TREES ARE THE GATHERING PLACES OF HAPPY PEOPLE— AND I HATE HAPPY PEOPLE!
ME—I'M DIFFERENT! EVERYBODY HATES ME, AND I HATE EVERYBODY!
EVEN IF IT IS CHRISTMAS EVE, THOSE KIDS HAVE GOT TO LEARN TO OBEY MY ORDERS! SNORT! GROWL!
TOYS
BOY! AM I HAVIN' FUN! WOW! HERE, DON, HAVE ANOTHER PEANUT!
FINALLY!
IT'S OVER!
© 1984 Walt Disney Productions

Barks's best Christmas stories seldom confront such hostility head-on. They work around it, soften its impact by projecting it onto an obvious villain, and end on a happy or humorous note. It is no great shock to watch Uncle Scrooge or the witch from *Snow White* acting cantankerous—we expect it of them. In due course, Scrooge will undergo a change of heart, the witch will be destroyed, and all will be well. "I always tried to end my stories on an upbeat note," Barks has said.

"Christmas on Bear Mountain" certainly ends on a humorous note, but a rather puzzling one. At first glance, we expect the story to be standard Christmas fare because of its Dickensian trappings. "The office wanted me to do a Christmas story," Barks recalls. "Casting around, I began to think of the great Dickens Christmas story about Scrooge. Now I was just thief enough to steal some of the idea and have a rich uncle for Donald."

Scrooge McDuck, when we meet him in this story, has the name, miserliness, and avuncular standing of Charles Dickens's Ebeneezer; but there the resemblance ends. Barks did not put Scrooge to any of the uses which Dickens made of his character. The rich old duck is not a vehicle for moral instruction, a bad example finally brought by a combination of sympathy and horror to see the error of his ways and reform. He is simply an eccentric secondary character brought in for the sake of the comic situation which propels the plot. He is not even particularly comic, unless we are amused by his rather forced jollity at the party which ends the story. Scrooge's stance at the Christmas party is decidedly stiff, not so much because he is not used to having fun, but because he is as self-involved and dominating at the end of the story as he was at its outset. He tries to run the whole story from behind the scenes, setting up the gift of cabin and food as a trap to test Donald, to see if his nephew measures up to Scrooge's standard for bravery. At the end of the story, he is still running the show, doling out treats and presents in a patronizing way. "Boy!" he exclaims, "am I havin' fun! Here, Don, have another peanut!"

Handing out peanuts—and a mountain cabin with a stocked refrigerator *is* peanuts to

LEFT: Panels from the melancholy morality play by Barks, "A Christmas for Shacktown."

ABOVE: A gallery of Barks's many Christmas moods: despair . . . frustration . . . aggression . . . greed . . . malevolence . . . malice . . . domination . . . guilt . . . forced gaiety . . . exhaustion.

ACROSS TOWN IN THE HUGE MANSION OF UNCLE SCROOGE McDUCK!
HERE I SIT IN THIS BIG LONELY DUMP WAITING FOR CHRISTMAS TO PASS! BAH! THAT SILLY SEASON WHEN EVERYBODY LOVES EVERYBODY ELSE! A CURSE ON IT!
ME—I'M DIFFERENT! EVERYBODY HATES ME, AND I HATE EVERYBODY!

TOP AND BOTTOM: Fragments from "Christmas on Bear Mountain."

a man with Scrooge's wealth—and then watching his nephews jump is how Scrooge gets his kicks, enjoying the power of wealth. Later Barks was to develop this preoccupation with money into a miserly fetish—and still later such routines as swimming in a sea of money—so unique in its fantasy that it became charming rather than threatening or offensive to us. In "Bear Mountain," however, Scrooge is simply a snarling old patriarch.

The power that Scrooge's money gives him causes him to manipulate, rather than love, his relatives. In this aspect Barks drew from Dickens, but did not take the comparison between a natural familial relationship and the dominance of rich over poor to any edifying conclusion for his modern audience.

"Bear Mountain" ends with no person and no moral precept the winner. By sheer accident, Scrooge believes Donald to be brave, for he has seen Donald asleep in the arms of a giant grizzly. Donald, of course, has simply fainted in terror and fallen into the sleeping bear's arms. Scrooge rewards Donald with a party and a special gift—so he has been duped.

But Donald's surprise gift is a "genuine Siberian silvertip bearskin rug" which so terrifies him that he faints once again—so he gets no pleasure out of having (unintentionally) swindled Scrooge into generosity. And Scrooge, who thought he had at last found a brave man, the one thing in this world he could learn to like—Barks never explained this quirk; it was simply inserted to motivate the plot—is left uncertain of his victory, sweating bullets. Reversal upon reversal!

What, then, is the story about? Gifts have changed hands. There have been several Christmas feasts, including the bears' raid on the icebox and Donald's incongruous Lobster Newburg for breakfast. And a test of character has taken place. These all should be elements of a sincere, even a sentimental Christmas tale. Instead they turn in on themselves, become absurd, and the story ends in a kind of moral confusion—or, more simply, a lack of moral framework. This ambiguity of structure and theme also made it easy for Barks to fill up the middle of the story with a great number of sight gags more appropriate to the slambang antics of an animated cartoon. "Christmas on Bear Mountain" has all been one big pratfalling joke on everyone—including the reader, if he had been hoping for a sentimental holiday piece! n

AFTER DINNER!
IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE, DONALD, THAT I HAVE DECIDED TO GIVE YOU A PRESENT—ONE BEFITTING A MAN OF YOUR RUGGED QUALITY!
SO, HAVING SEEN HOW MUCH YOU LOVE BEARS—HERE IS YOUR CHRISTMAS PRESENT FROM UNCLE SCROOGE!
A GENUINE SIBERIAN SILVERTIP BEARSKIN!
EEK!
HE—HE FAINTED! WHY?
PONK!

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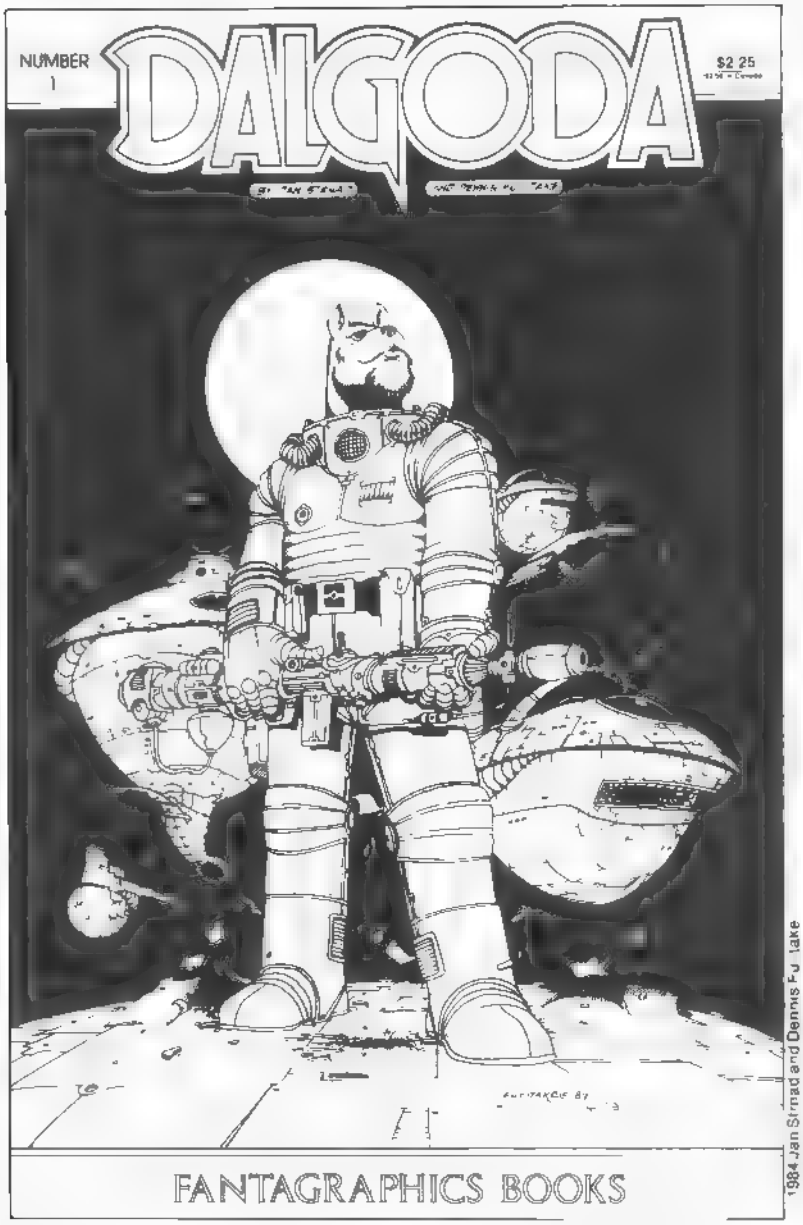
More Than Man's Best Friend...

Mankind's Last Hope!



Written by
Jan Strnad

Illustrated by
Dennis Fujitake

Colored by
Kenneth Smith

A new color comic coming in June from

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

A Letter From The Duck Man

Compiled from the correspondence of Carl Barks

Geoff Blum has compiled the following "letter" from excerpts from numerous pieces of correspondence written by Barks through the years. When comics fans discovered—slowly but with growing excitement—just who the anonymous "Good Duck Artist" was for Dell Comics, they wrote fan letters. And Carl Barks proved to be a ready and amiable correspondent. These chatty, folksy paragraphs perfectly mirror Barks the artist... and Barks the friend. —*R.M.*

Well! A fan! Most happy to hear from you, suh! It's gratifying to know I have readers who like my stuff well enough to become fans. Most of my readers started on Disney comics as kids and have continued to this day. Among them are scientists, artists, advertising men, and college professors. So far not one has been a bank robber.

Your letter with its account of your complex deals in assembling a collection of Duck comics is very interesting. I am not a collector, so the thuggery and humbuggery that is part of the collecting business is all mysterious frenzy to me. When is the fad going to shift to some other favorite? Perhaps Bugs Bunny comics will be the gold mines of next year. Too bad I didn't foresee some of the demand for my early comics. I gave away a fortune back in the forties and fifties.

You ask about myself, perhaps figuring the personality and background of a writer colors his product. Could be, although some of the stuffiest prigs I ever saw wrote some of the jazziest material. I am 83 wheezy years old and don't look a day over 82½. In personal background I am a backwoods bumpkin. My people were wheat ranchers in sagebrushy eastern Oregon. What a windy, dusty, profitless life! I left that area in the early twenties and have been back there only briefly in the years since.

I had no college training. My education consists of eight grades in a one-room Oregon schoolhouse. But schools was GOOD in them days, son! I've traveled nowhere, seen few movies or plays, read few books (e.g. Zane Greys and Perry Mason). The background research evident in my comic book stories was laboriously dug out of my shelves of *National Geographics* and *Encyclopædia Britannicas*. I've long been afflicted with partial deafness, so I've missed any oral exchanges with people whose ideas might have broadened my intellect. But I am interested in practically everything, which probably accounts for the wide range of adventures which befall Uncle Scrooge and the Ducks.

On the physical plane, my experiences during my early years, when I worked as a farmer, logger, riveter, muleskinner, pseudo-cowboy, and printing press feeder, always terribly inefficiently, gave me practical knowledge for complicating many of Donald Duck's problems. The perversity of beasts, machines, and nature I knew by heart.

When did I begin drawing? In childhood. I first copied such stone-age comic artists as Winsor McCay and Opper. Always was inclined to invent my own comic faces, figures, and scenes. What I copied from the cartoonists of the day was their technique of pen handling and shading.

At about age 15 I subscribed to the old Landon School mail-order course in cartooning. I never finished the course, because World War I was in the air, and a teenager could earn five dollars a day in the hay fields. But the thorough basics outlined in those few Landon lessons have been the foundation beneath my whole concept of dramatic and humorous presentation.

Most of what I know about drawing I taught myself. I learned to draw cartoons well enough to sell by imitating drawing styles that caught my fancy, but I fully agree with the expression that he who teaches himself has a stupid professor. Any kid who thinks art schools don't help a beginner needs his head replaced.

In the early thirties I sold cartoons to the *Calgary Eye-Opener*, a risque humor magazine in the *Whiz Bang* format. Your granddad might remember *Whiz Bang*. Them was the days when drawing was fun! Also sold a couple of cartoons to *Judge*. Your granddad would surely remember that hip old slick humor magazine that was in every dentist's waiting room.

I got 90 bucks a month from the *Eye-Opener*, which was for writing and drawing more than half the book, editing it, and composing stalling letters to contributors to gloss over the fact that no money was in the bank to pay for their stuff. Freelancing and work on the *Eye-Opener* kept me out of the bread lines until 1935, when I got on at the Walt Disney Studio. There, as part of my training, I had to attend art classes several hours a week for several months.

I worked for seven years in Disney's story department, where we drew very rough sketches with big pencils for the storyboards. Needless to say, I was a "duck man." I learned much from the way we had to polish and repolish our scenarios in the old Donald Duck animation shorts. Plots had to *build*, and climaxes had to crackle. We had to stage gags with characters so paced and so expressively emoting that viewers could grasp the whole idea in fractions of a second. Some of that spit and polish may still be rubbing off on my work.

The grind was terrific. My leaky sinuses wouldn't take the air conditioning. I got wind that Western Printing and Lithography was in need of stories and art for original Disney comics, so I did a little art for them while still in the Studio. My first comic book work was for "Donald Duck Finds Pirate Gold" in 1942. That was the first of the full-length *Donald Duck* adventures.

I took a chance, quit Disney, and moved to the San Jacinto desert to dry out my sinuses and raise chickens. Luckily I caught on quick with Western. I started to do them a few Donald Duck ten-page stories in my spare time and was soon so swamped with work, I gave up the chickens and went into full-time duck production. My first full-length story-and-art combo was "Donald Duck and the Mummy's Ring" in 1943.

I was a loner, working in a small town far from any contacts with other comic-bookers. I wrote my scripts in pencil. Each page was broken down into panel notations of scene, characters, and dialogue. This script was never sent to the editors. I started drawing the story with no-one's okay but my own. (What a change from my years in the Disney Studio Duck story unit!)

My drawing paper was about two-and-a-quarter times the size of the printed page. I drew direct on the sheet with a blue pencil, then inked the drawings. You ask if I had another artist working with me. Yes—my wife. During most of the last dozen years, she inked the dialogue, drew backgrounds such as countless vats of diamonds and bins of money, and painted in all the solid blacks and shading. Prior to 1953, I did all my own drawing.

The drawings were usually mailed to the Los Angeles office of the publishers, and soon a check would plop into my mailbox. I had virtually no trouble with the editors, because I was tooth-chatteringly *careful* about what I produced. Very seldom during the years did parts of a story come back for changes, which is fortunate, for I was of a sour-puss temperament that blew my marbles in all directions at the first hint of having to do anything twice.

As for pay, I got about average for the industry. In reply to your comment that I must have had much fulfillment from my work, I'll say that I fulfilled everything except my wallet.

The variations you see in the duck's appearance over the years are due to trying to keep him looking like the screen duck, whose appearance changed radically. Other changes were caused by switching the grade of paper I drew on. My best work has always been on Strathmore medium surface. In the old days I was furnished with Strathmore, and my style was more detailed and the characters more expressive. Then along in the middle fifties the office got on a money-saving kick and began furnishing us artists with a clay-coated import from Germany. The pencil and pen dug into the surface and couldn't be guided with any finesse. The result was a tightening of the lines, less bounce to the characters. I griped, but the economy of the cheaper paper won out in the front office.

I didn't originate Donald, Daisy, or Grandma Duck. However, the nephews and Gus Goose first saw the light of day in the duck story unit in which I worked at the Studio. I invented Uncle Scrooge, Gladstone Gander, Gyro Gearloose, Magica de Spell, Flintheart Glomgold, and the Beagle Boys while working for Western Publishing. These characters were created to fill specific needs in certain stories. I hardly expected ever to use them again, but their special type did become useful. Uncle Scrooge especially kept developing new outshoots of character like a tree growing and unfolding leaves of thousand-dollar bills.

My firm resolve in the Duck stories was to keep off the shop-worn cops-and-robbers kick that depraves so much of TV and other mediums these days. As a result, my gimmicks have usually dealt with human frailties like greed, pride, and arrogance. A kid long ago told me that he like the stories because he never knew when he picked up the magazine whether Donald was going to be a hero, a villain, a windbag, or a heel. I seldom knew myself until well along with the writing of each story. Then, when I needed that "extra something" that would give the story a reason for existing, I'd tag the duck with a character. Squares call that extra something the moral.

Your mention that my stories are frequently satirical sent me to the dictionary. I realize after reading the definition for satire that you're right. I can assure you that it's been an outright accident. I was incapable of writing much in the way of hidden messages into my stories.

I guess I found it natural to satirize the yearnings and pomposities and frustrations of the ducks because of my early contacts with people in the rougher walks of life. The cowboys, ranchers, loggers, and steel workers with whom I worked before I broke into the "soft" field of cartooning were all satirists. They had the ability to laugh at the most awesome miseries. If they hadn't seen humor in their hard-bitten lives, they'd have gone crazy.

One thing I should make clear. I was writing *escapist* entertainment. The plots that so often featured the "far away and long ago," as a Boston fan expressed it, were staged in those areas and times because they took the reader out of his present world. Archaeology is interesting to practically everybody, and I was striving to get the atmosphere of ancient cultures and places into my stories, also the old lost treasure gimmick that is forever popular with kids.

The comic books of the "golden years" of the forties, fifties, and sixties were all escapist reading in my opinion. The kids who read *Superman, Plastic Man,* and *Tales from the Crypt* were all taking a trip. The fad for that form of escape is now almost defunct. Comics have been replaced by pot.

Recently a fan sent me J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*. These books are my first sample of Fantasy Fiction. I never read *Alice in Wonderland*, Grimm, or Hans Christian Andersen. And to find that Tolkien deliberately slants the stories at adult readers makes me do a double-take. Yet he repeatedly stresses the point that his Hobbits are creatures of *fantasy*. Somehow I'd gotten the idea that fantasy fiction was for kids only, and that science fiction was the type that authors slanted at adults.

An odd coincidence has happened. My wife just now brought a fan letter from the post office. It's from a guy in Seattle. Here is a quote from the letter: "Those long one-shots about Donald and Scrooge (stir) that 'sense of wonder' that is missing in most fantasy fiction."

Get that *fantasy fiction*. Here's another quote: "You created a fine world of fantasy—yet the adult humor through it made it realistic, too. And the faults of your characters made them lovably human."

Get that *fantasy . . . adult humor . . . lovably human*. I've always looked upon the Ducks as caricature human beings. Perhaps I've been years writing in that middle world that J.R.R. Tolkien describes, and never knew it. Anyway, I'll be watching author Tolkien as I read his involved stories. What a world he has created, and all without the use of self-important homo sapiens. I suspect that somewhere he'll let slip a line that shows he really is writing about caricatured human beings.

A pre-Disney cartoon by Carl Barks that appeared on the cover of the humor magazine *Coo Coo*.

I hope that the stories you have read in the Duck and Scrooge books have helped to give you a broader understanding of life, as well as entertainment. I always tried to write a story that I wouldn't mind buying myself. In my attempts to make my comics worth 10¢ or 12¢ or 15¢ I seem to have produced some passages that were even worth remembering. If more of my readers grow up to sit in the Senate chamber than to sit in the gas chamber, I'll have been richly rewarded for trying to turn out a good product.

No, I don't have any more sketches to sell at the present time. I'm too busy trying to paint more great "artworks" to even sort out the few old production drawings I have left. Maybe when I retire—

Keep working at the things you like to do. Sometimes they pay off.

Sincerely
Carl Barks

My aim in creating this pastiche was to let Barks voice his own reflections on his life and work. Compiling the quintessential Barks letter seemed to be the answer, and there was a wealth of material to hand. In the 1960s, only a small number of Barks enthusiasts located the master. Answering fan mail was a treat, and he wrote his correspondents long, reflective replies. By distilling from many, I hoped to preserve all the choice passages.

The passages are excerpted from letters to, among others, Donald Ault, Dick Blackburn, R.O. Burnett, Tom Collins, John Coulthard, Bill Craig, Craig Hayes, Larry Ivie, Richard Kravitz, Don Lineberger, Bernie Ostrov, Michael Peak, John Spicer, Howard Steinbach, Don Thompson, John Verpoorten, Joe Vucenic, and Malcolm Willits. —*Geoffrey Blum*

Adaptation and Refinement:

Animation Vs. Comic Book Creation In Barks' Work

by Tom Andrae

Carl Barks joined the Disney Studio in 1935 and began working as an in-betweener, the starting position for animators. In-betweeners filled in the action between key character poses drawn by veteran animators. Anxious to advance himself, the Duck Artist began submitting gags for various Disney cartoons, and in 1936 he was promoted to the story department on the strength of a joke written for the Donald Duck cartoon "Modern Inventions."

"We were trying to think of things that Donald could invent or that he could get involved in, so I happened to come up with the idea of a barber chair that would automatically clip somebody's hair; and Donald, being a precocious character, sort of messed up the machinery in it by trying to get his coin back. I had no idea how the gag would be used. I just created a situation in which Donald got in the barber chair and it flipped him upside down and gave him a haircut on the wrong end.

"When the gag was turned in, I had shown it all in sort of comic strip form. Walt saw it, paid me $50 for the gag, and suggested that I should be put into the story department." The gag Barks wrote led Walt and the animators to think they had enough material to make a picture on the subject, and Disney assigned Barks to write a script for the story in collaboration with Jim King, who was appointed director of the picture.

After finishing "Modern Inventions," Barks recalled that he "was put into a little room and told to think up another story." The other story was for a new Mickey Mouse short tentatively entitled "Northwest Mounted." This would be the only Mickey cartoon on which Barks worked, for after "Modern Inventions," he specialized almost exclusively in writing stories for the Donald Duck shorts. Barks drew most of more than 300 storyboards for "Northwest Mounted" and wrote a plot synopsis for it. Following the practice of the studio, the Duck Man drew several versions of the chase and rescue sequences to allow for different treatments.

Like a number of Disney projects prepared over the years, "Northwest Mounted" was never produced and exists only in storyboard form. Some of these storyboards are reproduced here for the first time. The cartoon is important in understanding Barks's work because it is the first adventure story he had a hand in writing and shows the artist's work at a nascent stage when he was first learning the techniques he would bring to fruition in his later comic-book classics. The story is doubly significant because in it Barks first rendered the frontier saga set in the Klondike during the gold rush era and anticipates many tales to come based on this material.

By comparing this adventure with the later, but similar, comic-book story "Sheriff of Bullet Valley" (Barks's first of two Donald Duck one-shots set in the American West), we can see how he drew upon his training in animation, enriching and refining it in his comic-book stories.

The roots of Barks's satire of Western films in "Bullet Valley" lie in his parody of the melodramatic plots and hackneyed heroics of serial potboilers in "Northwest Mounted." From their inception, the Mickey shorts had been based upon gentle parodies of such cliches. "Northwest Mounted" continues this tradition, spoofing the "derring-do" of the Mountie hero who saves the helpless damsel in distress, Minnie, from the clutches of the dastardly villain, Pegleg Pete. Minnie is the owner of a secret gold mine whose whereabouts Pete is determined to discover. He kidnaps her, and takes her to his mountain hideout (changed to a snowbound campsite in Barks's alternate sequence). In order to learn the mine's location, Pete threatens to crush Minnie under a giant rock unless she tells. When she refuses, he lights a rope by which the rock is suspended as a counter-weight, giving her minutes to live. In an alternate sequence Pete threatens to shoot her, counting down three minutes before he pulls the trigger. The bulk of the cartoon concerns Mickey's attempt to find and rescue Minnie.

A number of striking similarities between this story and "Bullet Valley" exist; first, the locale of the chase sequence is the same. Both Pete and Blacksnake McQuirt, the cattle rustler and Donald's nemesis in "Bullet Valley," are chased into the badlands with a climactic comic battle, concluding the story. Pete is a model for Blacksnake; both are tough, burly, thoroughly unscrupulous felines who show only two front teeth in their cavernous maws when angered or frightened.

"Blacksnake was an off-shoot of Black Pete," Barks explained. "He looks like a typical Disney villain, which is what I felt was required." Blacksnake is a more subdued villain than Pete, however, reflecting the requirements of comic book stories for more subtle forms of action and humor than animation. Unlike Pete in "Northwest Mounted," Blacksnake does not become a comic menace until the very end of the story when he loses his pants in a shoot-out with Donald and the duck takes revenge by turning him into a human yo-yo.

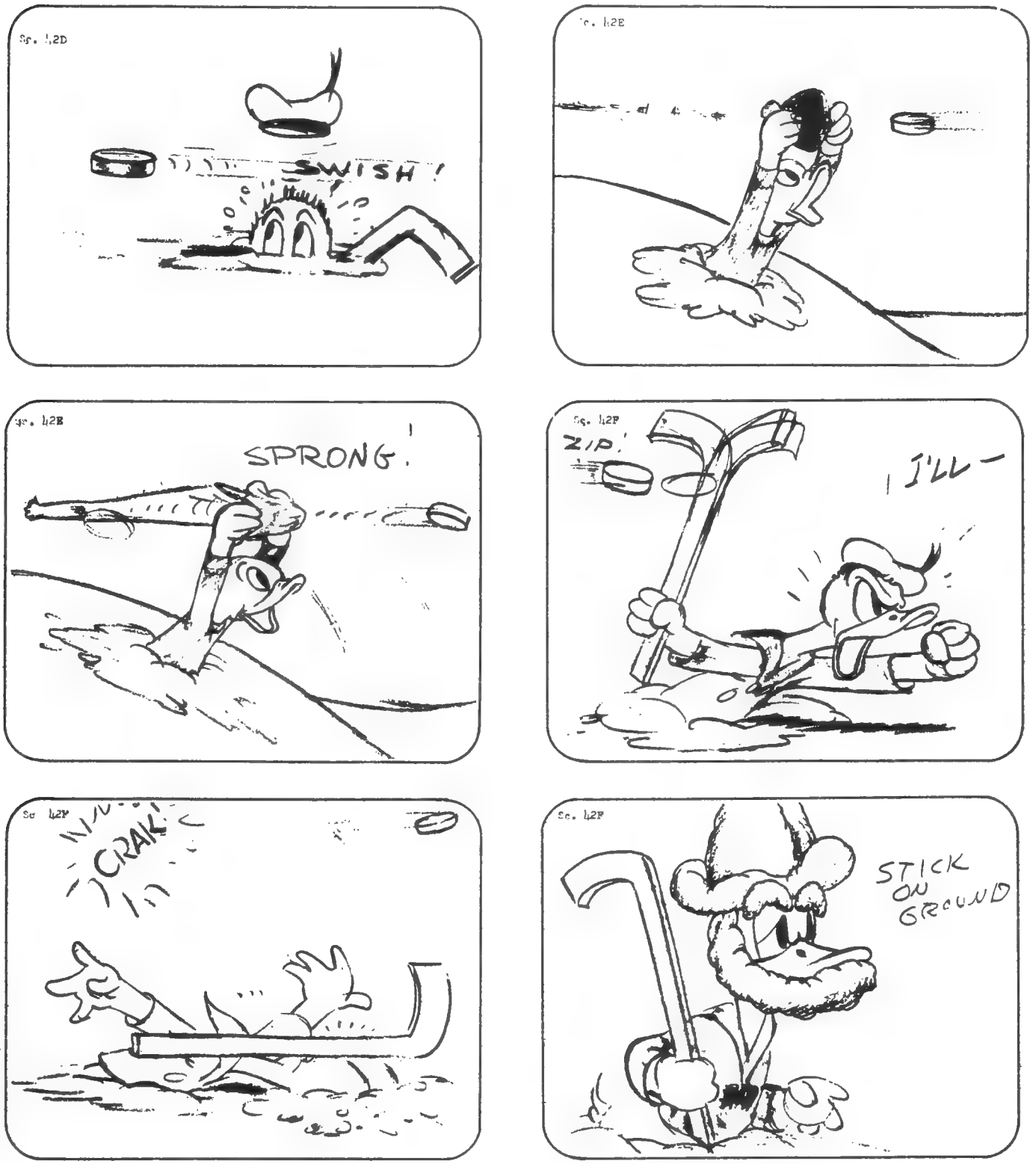
After using Pete as a comic menace in the first three *Donald Duck* adventures (*Dell Four Colors* #9, #29, #62), Barks dropped him in the fourth one-shot, "Terror of the River" (*FC* #108). This change in Donald's foes may be partly due to Barks's desire to depart from the less complex stories and humor of animation. "Black Pete was Mickey's villain. I assumed I would not be allowed to use him except in certain standard ways." After the late '40s Barks had less use for villains like Blacksnake or Pete, preferring to pit the ducks against situations their environments placed them in rather than having them attempt to overcome villainous adversaries.

The close of the chase sequence in "Northwest Mounted" is reminiscent of the ending of "Bullet Valley." In both stories Barks parodied the Western-style chase and climactic fight in which the hero routs the villain and saves the girl, and in both cases these sequences in-

volved gags concerning the hero's attempt to chase the villain over a log bridge spanning a chasm. In "Northwest Mounted" Pete shoots out the bridge, providing Barks with an excuse to devise various comic gimmicks by which Mickey can cross the chasm. In one sequence he replaces the broken remnants of the bridge by placing them one in front of another as if they could stand up by themselves in mid-air, defying gravity. In "Bullet Valley" the humor derives from their comic duel on the log rather than attempts to cross an open chasm.

Similarities between the climaxes of both stories are also apparent; in both cases Barks attempted to parody a major aspect of Western genre films: The hero is expected to rain down a torrent of violence on the villain in order to capture and subdue him. The hero's triumph thus entails a justification of his aggressive tactics and ultimate humiliation of the villain as a punishment for his dastardly crimes. In "Bullet Valley," Donald lassoes Blacksnake and causes his horse to see-saw back and forth, making the helpless villain a human yo-

A Barks storyboard from the Donald cartoon "Hockey Champ" (1939).



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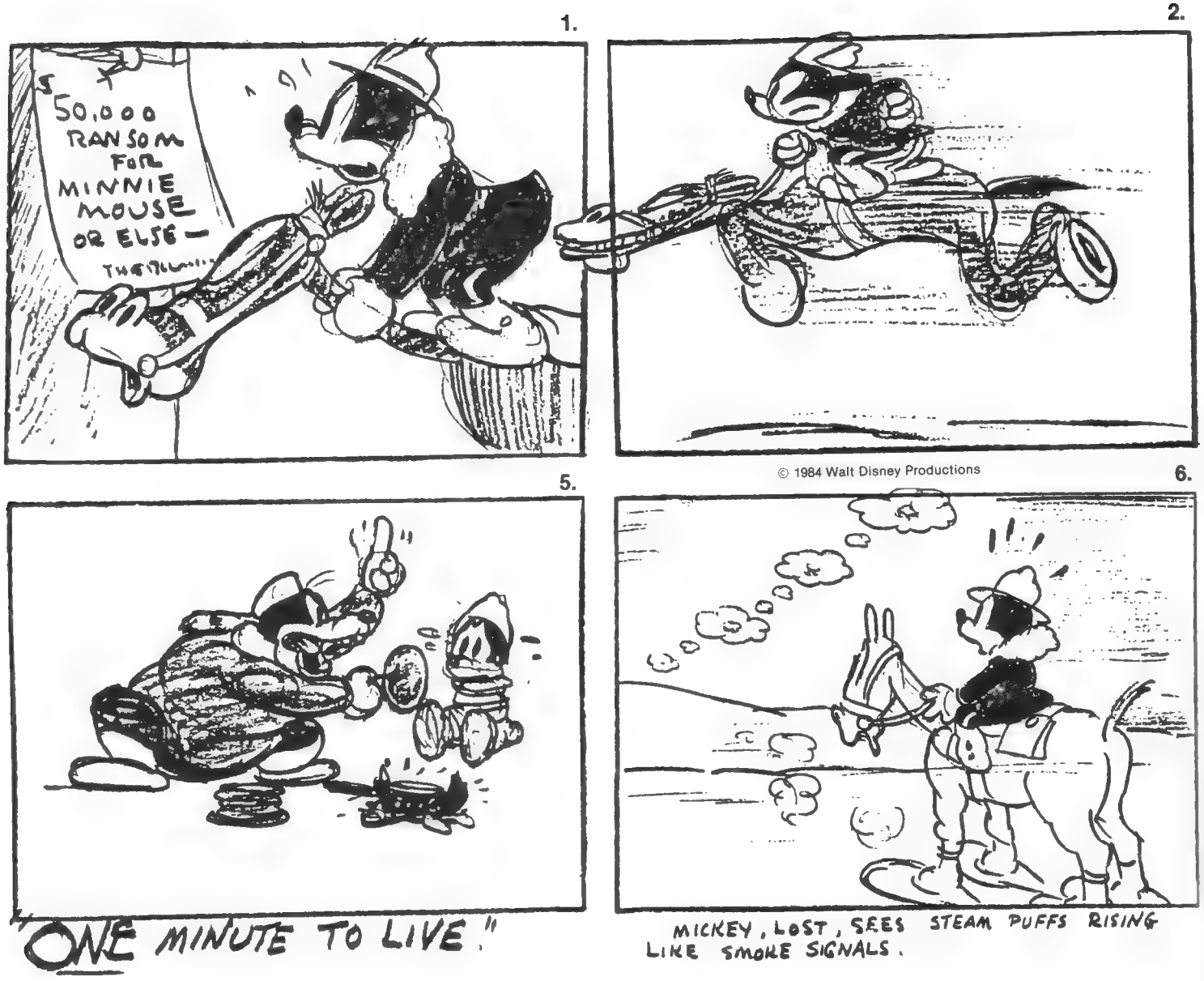
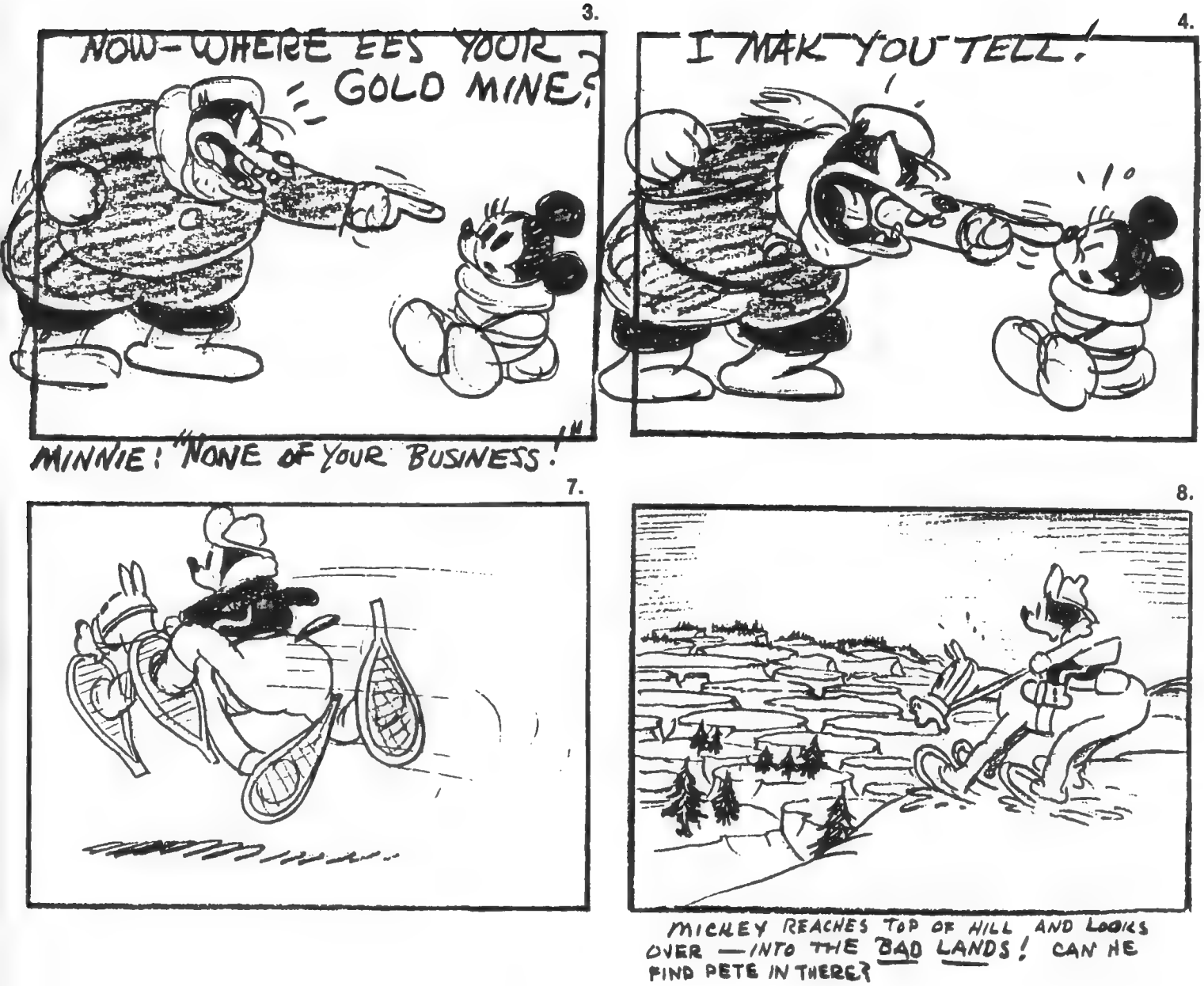


A sequence of storyboard drawings —rare Barks depictions of Mickey Mouse—for *Northwest Mounted*, proposed but never produced.

yo. In the cartoon adventure, Mickey's horse Tanglefoot twirls Pete in circles, juggling him as a trained seal would juggle a ball; and Tanglefoot delivers the *coup de grace* by bouncing Pete in the air, deftly kicking him so that he bounces twice and somersaults, landing flat on his back, out cold. The horse then jumps full force on the prone and helpless villain and with a delighted smile on his face does a full-gainer off Pete's stomach, landing right-side up. The sheer violence of Tanglefoot's actions both reveals and parodies the "B" Western's justification of heroic violence and aggression.

Major differences exist, however, between the cartoon and comic book sagas. Both Barks's stories and rescue sequences in "Northwest Mounted" emphasize Mickey's attempt to track down and save Minnie before Pete kills her. This approach reveals a crucial departure from the way adventure stories function in comic books. In the cartoon, the chase sequence is constructed through what in film terminology is called alternating montage. It is structured in terms of parallel scenes, alternating between Mickey's search for Pete and Pete's threats to Minnie. Thus events are shown which occur in different locations but are simultaneous. They are juxtaposed in order to heighten the audience's excitement by showing the increasing danger to Minnie as time progresses.

Alternating montage was used frequently in silent serials and Barks aptly recreated it to burlesque their melodramatic conventions. In contrast, alternating sequences are rarely used as a major mode of action in comic books because they operate according to different narrative principles. As a branch of the film medium, animation tends to emphasize the details of particular actions, whereas a comic book story necessarily selects from, and condenses, them. Consequently, animation often takes place in real time; comic book stories, conversely, may radically expand or contract time, as noted science fiction writer Samuel Delaney observed—"Comics are free of 'real time' in a way no other narrative medium is. Films certainly can skip over months and miles in a cut from shot to shot as can comics from panel to panel. But comics can take an action whose 'real time' is a few seconds and present three/five/a dozen clear and meaningful views, each a fraction of a second apart, without any of the strain on a narrative that the insertion of slow-motion would impart to an action sequence in a movie." Thus in the chase sequence in "Bullet Valley," the emphasis is not upon Donald's pursuit of Blacksnake (this is shown in only four panels), but is upon


3.
NOW—WHERE EES YOOR GOLD MINE?
4.
I MAK YOU TELL!
MINNIE! "NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!"
7.
8.
MICKEY REACHES TOP OF HILL AND LOOKS OVER —INTO THE BAD LANDS! CAN HE FIND PETE IN THERE?

the shoot-out and confrontation between Donald and Pete. Barks radically contracted the time taken by Donald's pursuit of Blacksnake and omitted any alternating sequences. Part of the reason for this difference, of course, is that "Bullet Valley" does not rely upon a rescue like "Northwest Mounted" does, but the differences between the two media, nevertheless, require distinctive types of narratives and are worthy of note.

Another crucial difference between animation and comics is the style of humor appropriate to each, and the type of events that can be depicted plausibly in each medium. In "Northwest Mounted" Barks relied on types of gags which had been the stock-in-trade of animation since its inception: One was his use of jokes deriving humor from the portrayal of outrageously impossible physical events. As mentioned previously, the scene in which Pete shoots out a log bridge over a mountain chasm offered Barks an opportunity to create highly-entertaining gimmicks involving physically impossible feats. In one sequence, he lassoes a stump on the other side in cowboy fashion, and pulls the two halves of the mountain together. In another sequence, Tanglefoot, Mickey's horse, stretches his body until he looks like a Dachshund, pulling his hind legs across after him just as the flimsy ice bridge he walked over cracks and falls to the chasm floor.

Gags deriving their humor from blatant physical impossibilities would not be as humorous in comic book stories as they are in animation because they would seriously undermine the comic book story's credibility. Consequently, in the chase sequence in "Bullet Valley," Barks showed us actions which are, in fact, physically impossible but not egregiously so; and rather than calling attention to their impossibility, as he did in "Northwest Mounted," Barks rendered them plausible: It is rather believable, although patently impossible, for Donald's horse to seesaw back and forth making a yo-yo out of Blacksnake, as impossible as it is ridiculous. Yet we can laugh at it without disrupting the suspension of disbelief which makes the story believable. Such contrasts display the genius of Carl Barks in almost instinctively adapting himself to the demands of his particular discipline.

OVERLEAF: A page from "Sheriff of Bullet Valley," the *Northwest Mounted* story as Barks finally drew it—for Donald Duck.

CRASH!
COME OUT FROM UNDER THERE, YOU COWARD, AND I'LL BLOW YOUR EARS OFF!
FOOLED YOU! THEM ROCKS KNOCKED ME THROUGH THE ROOF OF A CAVE!
STAND STILL SO I CAN HIT YOU!
MOVE AROUND SO YOU'LL GET IN THE WAY OF MY BULLETS!
WHAM! BANG! BOOM!
BOOM! BANG!
DARN! HE FILLED MY PANTS SO FULL OF LEAD MY BELT BUCKLE BROKE!
I'M GETTIN' OUTA HERE! MY GUNS ARE EMPTY!
THAT NEVER HAPPENED IN TRIGGER TRUESHOT'S PICTURES!
HALT AND SURRENDER! FROM THIS DISTANCE I CAN'T MISS!
PHOOEY TO YOU!
MY GOSH! THESE THINGS DO RUN DRY, DON'T THEY!
CLICK! CLICK!
CLICK!
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The Year Of The Duck

Bruce Hamilton, of Another Rainbow Publishing Co., has done as much as anybody to elevate Carl Barks to his rightful status as a recognized master of the comic-strip artform. Following is an interview with Hamilton on the Barks phenomenon, and the trials and joys of the Disney Preservation Movement—past, present, and future.

—Rick Marschall

Photo of Carl Barks by HELMUT WERB

NEMO: *One by one our comic strip favorites are turning fifty years old, and some of them are showing their age. In 1977 Mickey Mouse hit that historic half-century mark, and since then with varying degrees of media attention and public awareness it was the turn for Blondie, Dick Tracy, Popeye, and even Alley Oop. This year, on June 9, it is Donald Duck's turn. Walt Disney Productions' promotion and Another Rainbow's focus will inevitably settle, in part, on the old Duck Man, Carl Barks. Comments?*

Hamilton: So much has been written about the universal appeal of the Disney characters in general and the Mouse and the Duck in particular, it's difficult to fully assess the rising tidal wave of global interest in Barks. Many believe he is the most widely-read living comics artisan in the world; indeed, who else can claim to have had his work on sale in mass market stores and on newsstands every day of every week of every year in every free country in the world for 40 years? If that statement is unprovable and exaggeration, it isn't by much!

NEMO: *Barks has had quite an impact on two or three generations of readers.*

Hamilton: Russ Cochran and I, publishers of Another Rainbow, are boggled by the impact we see that this man continues to have. To compare his works with most of what's being done today offers a clue to why the public's interest in comics is deteriorating. Most of the blame for this either falls on the business types who decide the fate of comics marketing, or those who make the hard decisions as editors, pretending to know all about comics and their readership. These are the decision-makers who have been forcing adults away from the comics by catering to kids—and talking down to the very audience they're losing. When their bookkeepers tell these stuffed-chair sages the economics of what's happening, they blame each other or pass the buck, looking at a list of the top-grossing movies of the past year and wisely proclaiming, "Now *that's* what the public wants!"

NEMO: *Do you think they simply don't understand their own markets?*

Hamilton: What none of these non-fans ever seems to realize is that you can't produce quality by looking at what the competition is doing. The greatest innovators of our time from the Beatles to George Lucas didn't look around: they looked *back* into history for precedents, and then went forward. Just as music from all epochs influenced the Beatles, Lucas found inspiration from the comics. And he was a Barks fan!

NEMO: *Has it always been this way in the publishing business?*

Hamilton: It was accepted in the 1920s and 1930s that adults read comics as regularly as their kids. Why has the misconception spread so universally since then that "comics are for kids?" The *best* comics have always been for all ages. I personally believe that most comics, movies, and television shows that are *designed* for kids are garbage. One wonders how this system manages to occasionally produce a Carl Barks-type genius who doesn't write down to kids.

Another Rainbow has been pondering for three years how we can persuade more kids—and adults—to try reading a few of Carl Barks's stories. If ten million screaming doubters were tied down and force fed one set of the *Barks Library*, I'll wager we'd generate a million new fans! Advertising alone will not do it. We put a full page color ad in a publication that was sent out to 100,000 young superhero devotees and didn't get a single response. What a shame!

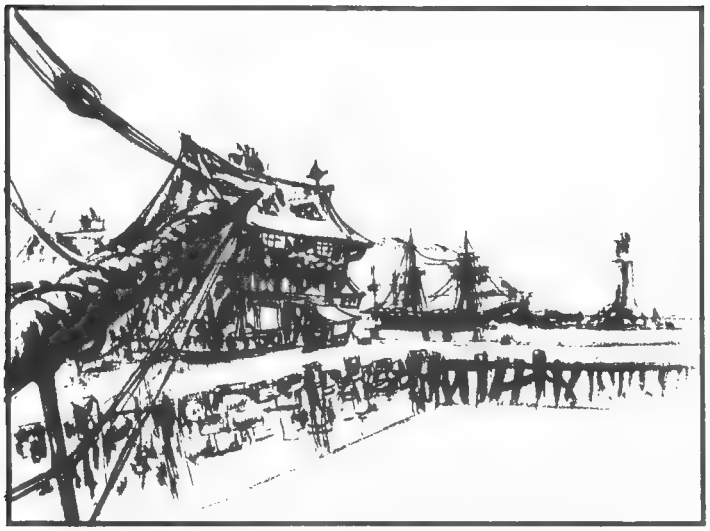
NEMO: *Is this a new phenomenon, or has it been building up for a long time?*

Hamilton: I raised a daughter in the 1960s and 1970s, herself a Barks comics fan, who would bring her friends into the house while her dad spread old, rare, valuable comic books of all types, including Disney's, on floors, on tables, only to see the youngsters step around the piles and pass by without showing the slightest interest.

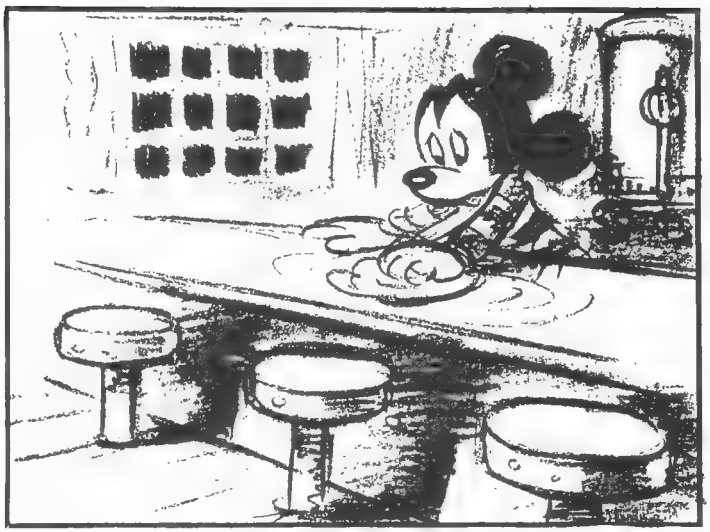
(continued on page 32)

OVERLEAF: Odyssey of a plot line: In the mid-'30s, the Disney Studio developed a story concept for an animated cartoon to star Mickey, Donald, Goofy, and Pluto. The working titles were "The Three Buccaneers" or "Pieces of Eight." The concept was abandoned, only to be revived in 1939 as "Morgan's Ghost" (minus Pluto). This cartoon was also halted (this time by the War), but 1200 storyboard drawings were executed. The next four pages include the drawings for the cartoon's opening. The concept behind the cartoon was resurrected by Carl Barks, who used many of the elements in his famous "Pirate Gold" story. It has been reported that Disney is currently considering "Morgan's Ghost" as the basis for a TV animation special.

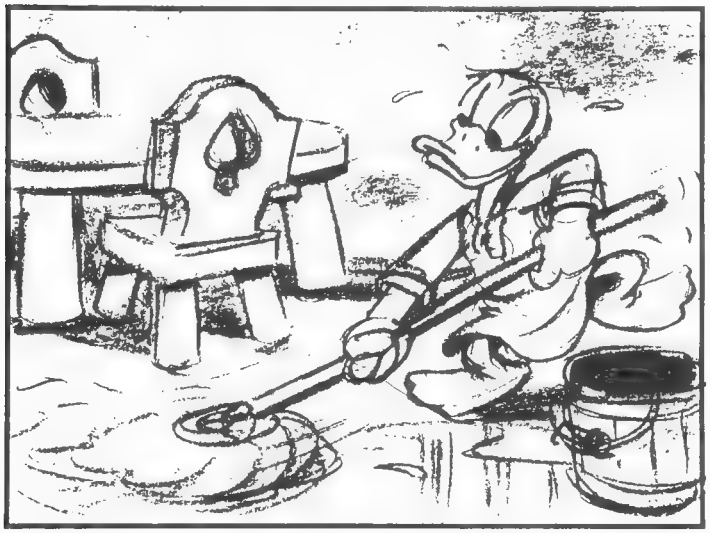
Morgan's Ghost



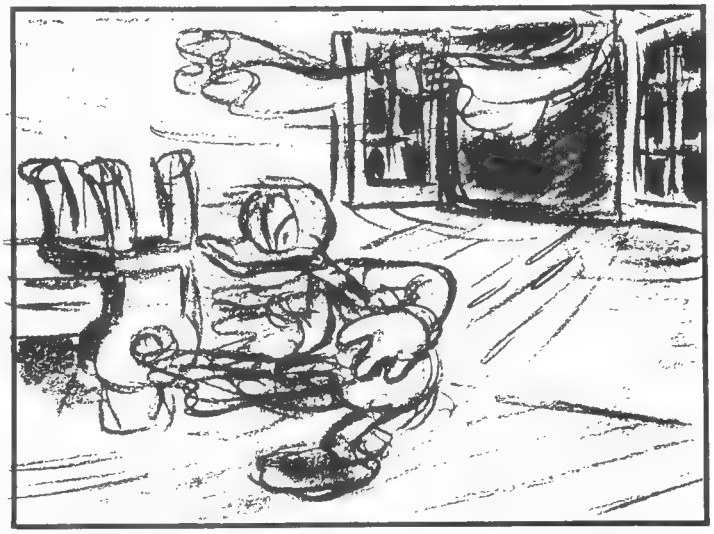
Our story begins many years ago at the site of an old, run-down, nearly-abandoned water front village.



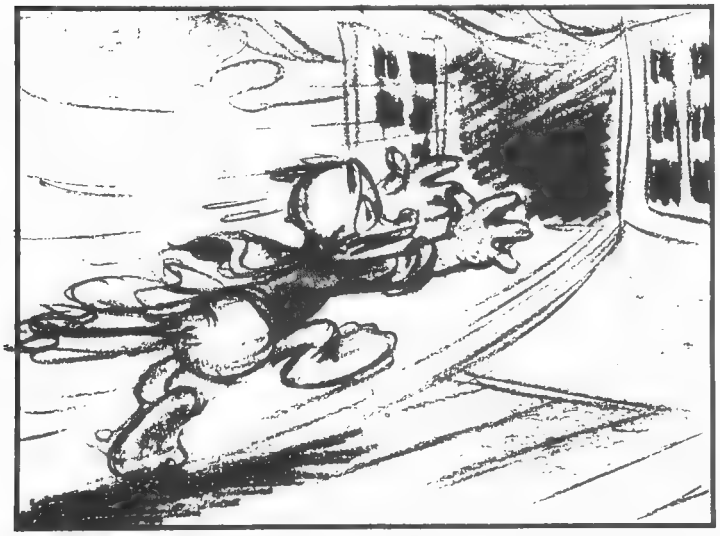
Inside a local restaurant/bar, the current proprietor, Mickey Mouse, polishes a countertop.



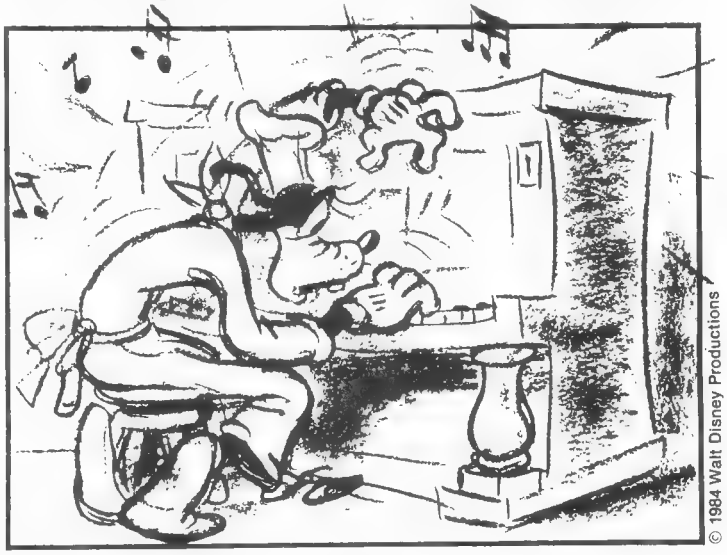
It's the end of a long day, and friend Donald Duck industriously scrubs the establishment's floors.



Without warning, the leading edge of a rainstorm whips the building and rattles the doors and windows.



Shutters blow open and a startled Donald rushes to close them before too much of the storm blows inside.



Chef Goofy, oblivious to the storm, toys with the player piano. The stage is set!

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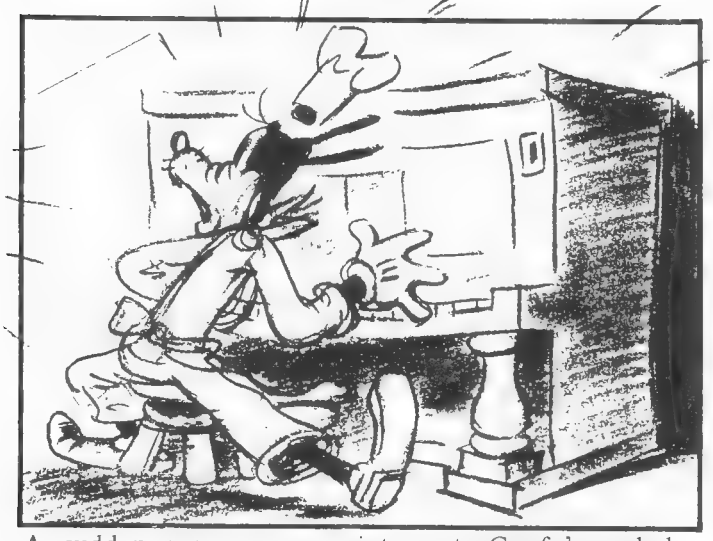
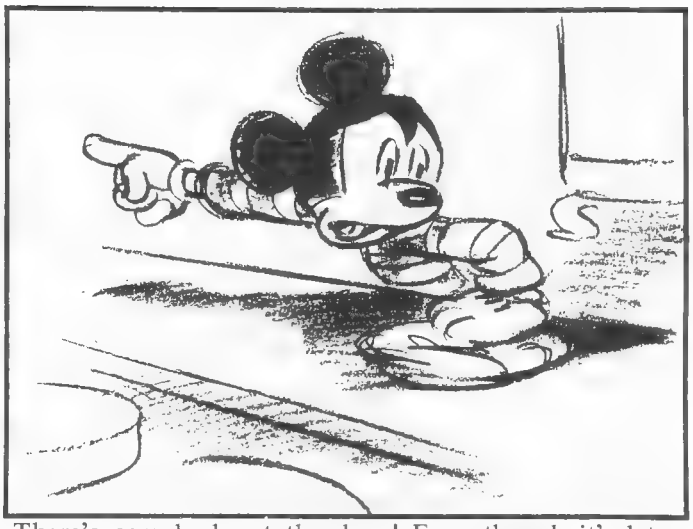
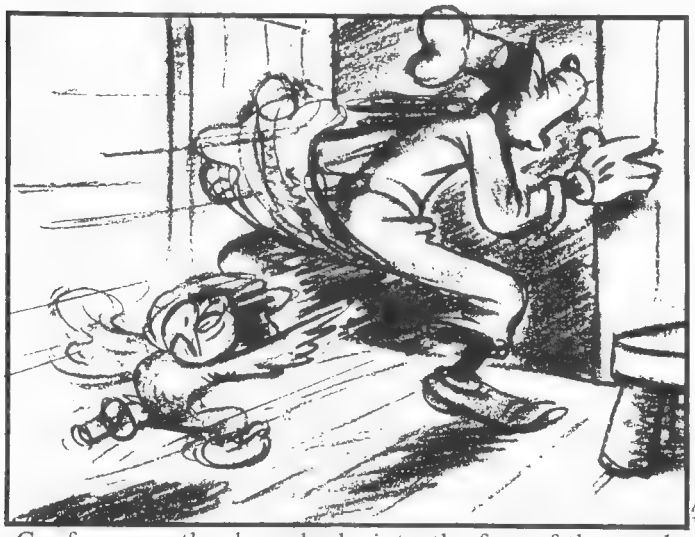
Morgan's Ghost



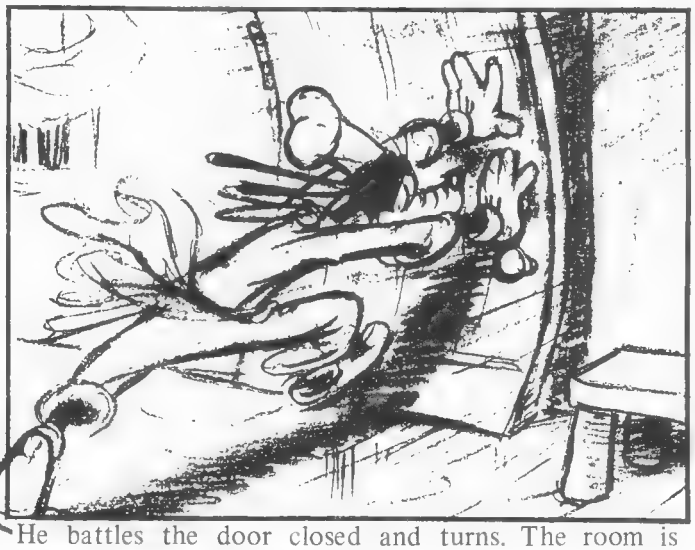
A sudden rap, rap, rap, interrupts Goofy's melody.



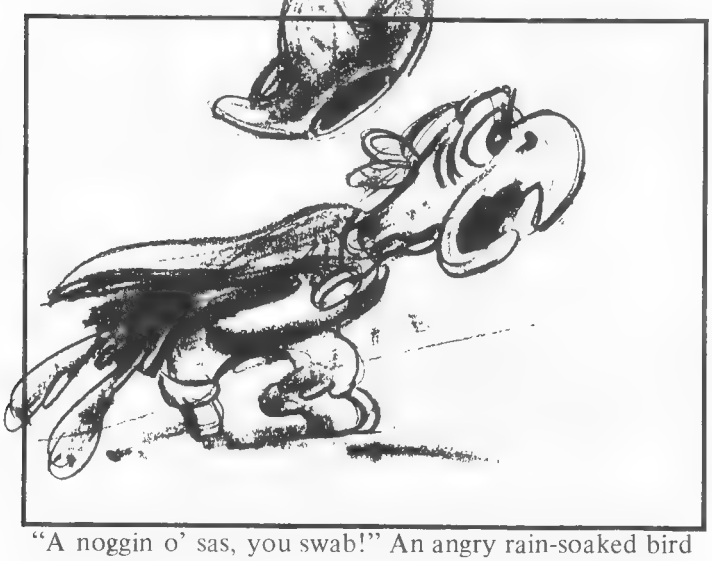
There's somebody at the door! Even though it's late, Mickey can't turn anyone away in this kind of weather.



Goofy opens the door, looks into the face of the rough weather outdoors, and sees no one.



He battles the door closed and turns. The room is greeted with a brusk command!



"A noggin o' sas, you swab!" An angry rain-soaked bird announces he is Yellowbeak and he wants his drink!

Mickey pours the sarsaparilla. This peg leg parrot is acting every inch the pirate!

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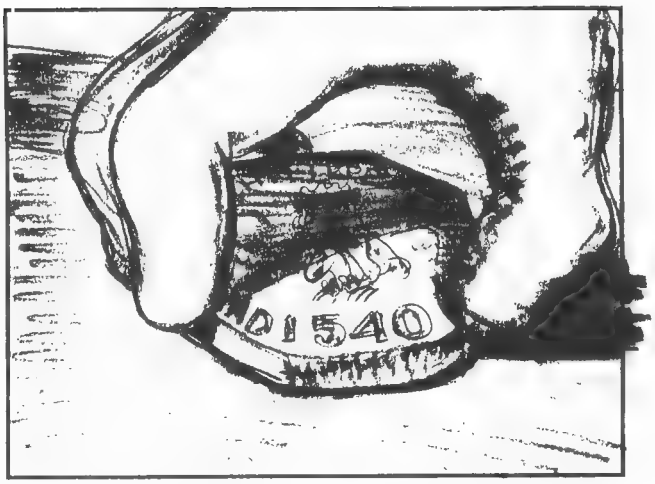
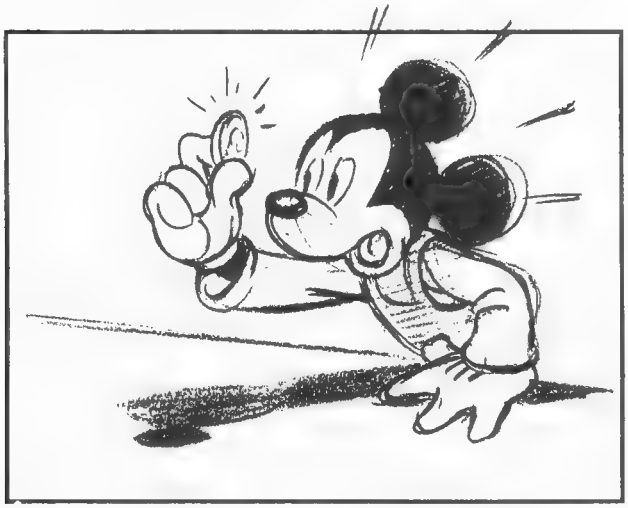
Morgan's Ghost

Yellowbeak quaffs a bit of the "sas," and produces a coin to pay for his drink.



Mickey immediately spots the odd shape and the glisten of gold!



It's an ancient coin, maybe a Piece of Eight . . . perhaps something from a pirate's chest!

"Have yuh got a treasure?" asks Donald.

Yellowbeak is angry and defensive. But he hides something behind his back!

Then the canny old parrot muses, "M-m-m." These lads may know something they're not saying.

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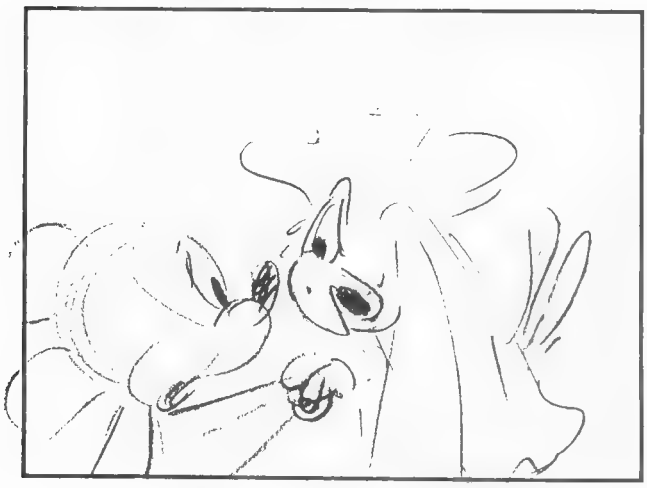
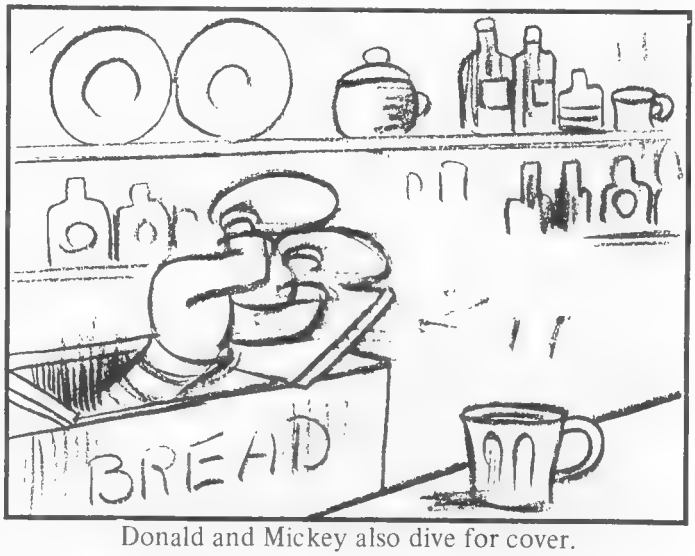
Morgan's Ghost



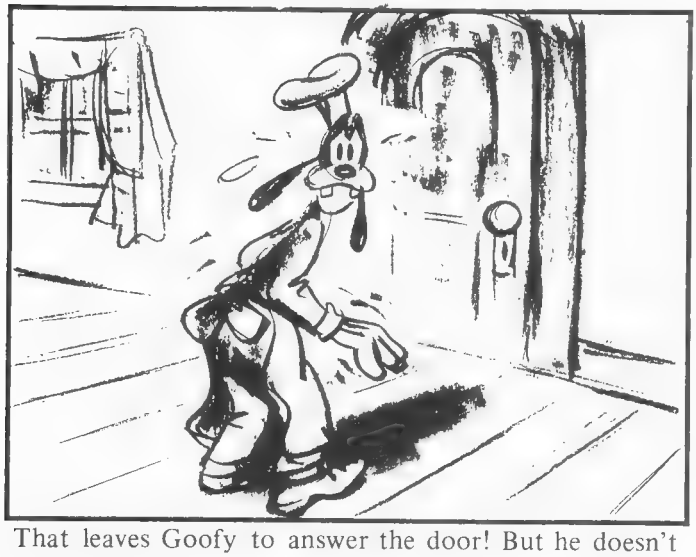
"You ain't seen a big man, lad . . . a big man what's broad in th' beam a lookin' for a parrot?"

Before Mickey can reply, the room echoes with ominous heavy-fisted banging at the door! "What's that?"

The parrot knows he must not be seen and he pleads with Mickey to find him a place to hide!



Donald and Mickey also dive for cover.



That leaves Goofy to answer the door! But he doesn't get the chance.

A dark, hulking figure slams the door open and stands there surveying the room. The only sound is the rattle-bang of furniture as Goofy slips away! It's Black Pete!

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(continued from page 27)

In the early 1970s I had two sobering experiences that made me re-evaluate my opinion of the whole future of collecting comic memorabilia. First, Carmine Infantino (then publisher of DC Comics) sat in my living room in Scottsdale with his company's circulation manager and predicted that if the then-current trends of rapidly declining newsstand distribution of comic books continued, both Marvel Comics and DC would be out of business in two years! The comic specialty stores that were just beginning to make themselves felt in a few of the major markets accounted for no more than maybe two or three percent of the industry's sales. Pure economics had led to the decline: it just was no longer profitable for a retail variety store to have a comic book rack. In fact, the day of the Mom-and-Pop operation—the neighborhood drug store or grocery that catered to the entire family and counted as its customers everyone within walking distance—had been replaced by convenience markets within easy driving distance, and large discount stores. Most of these locations didn't *want* kids hanging around. The profits from comic books didn't justify the floor space they took up, and kids often sat around just reading them and not buying anyway. For every new outlet the distributors were adding, ten were being dropped.

NEMO: *But this situation was finally turned around.*

Hamilton: Fortunately the comic specialty shops saved the industry and Infantino's prediction was wrong.

My second depressing revelation was indirectly related to the first. Sol Harrison of DC Comics came up with "Solly's Folly"—as it came to be known—the idea of selling comics out of a mobile comic book van, like the oldtime ice-cream vendors, tinkling a bell and driving up and down streets in residential neighborhoods and near schools, peddling the DC line to children whom they assumed longed for comics no longer available at nearby newsstands.

When I first heard about this idea I knew it could have worked when *I* was a kid. When I expressed interest, Infantino and Harrison offered me the opportunity to test-market DC's Comic Mobile in Arizona. They'd tried it in New Jersey and on Long Island with mixed results, and the far-off "out west" must have sounded good.

The Comic Mobile—a brand-new Dodge panel truck with a handsome, brilliantly-rendered logo on each side and with a festival of decal drawings of Superman, Wonder Woman, Batman, the Green Lantern, etc., plastered everywhere but on the windows—attracted a lot of attention when I drove it back from New York. It received rapt attention from passing motorists, gas jockeys, toll-bridge operators and about everybody else . . . except kids. I was not to know it, though, until the actual test-marketing began, an experience no life-long lover of comics should ever have to suffer through.

I'm still incredulous when I recall that first day when I pompously drove down a likely street just after school and spotted a dozen kids playing in a vacant lot. I pulled slowly to the curb, bell tinkling, only to have the kids look up, as if to say "What's that?" and then go right back to what they were doing without even bothering to investigate! I was too *embarrassed* to be angry.

NEMO: *It's difficult to imagine that none showed any interest.*

Hamilton: I was angry later, when I realized that these kids, for the most part, were lost forever. They weren't comic fans then and they never would be.

NEMO: *Has Another Rainbow been doing anything to get brand new customers? Kids and/or adults?*

Hamilton: In the last two years our company has introduced, or re-introduced, Barks's name and art to millions of people, and a few hundred seem to have pretty seriously come into his camp. We advertised a lithograph of one of his Disney oil paintings and then the first set of the *Carl Barks Library* in color in a catalog that's mailed quarterly to over five-million major credit card holders in the U.S.

NEMO: *This push must have been meant primarily to reach the adult audience.*

Hamilton: The paradox of this push was that it was aimed at charge-card-affluent parents, who we assumed would have no problem with the price tag. Our mail, however, did not indicate that "parents" responded; not one phone call or letter made reference to the buyer's children. These people actually seem to have bought these coffee-table reprints for themselves!

NEMO: *Do you think, then, that there is no real way to effectively reach new numbers of people?*

Hamilton: We think that if there is any *one* answer to the woes of the comic-strip and comic-book industry, it will come from publicizing the examples of the best we have to offer. We think Barks's stories come closer to setting the standard than any other. But maybe we're prejudiced.

NEMO: *Can you tell us something about Carl Barks the man?*

Hamilton: I'm reminded of something that Russ Cochran wrote: "Meeting the heroes of your childhood can sometimes be a devastating experience, if the person you have admired from afar for many years turns out to be a disappointment in the flesh. Such was not the case with Carl Barks. Collectors who meet Barks are pleased to find that the man is just as you would imagine him to be. Millions of comic book readers fell in love with his stories and his characters and the subtleties of his artwork. It is reassuring to know that the man behind all those marvelous stories is a happy, busy, good-natured octogenarian who lives up to all your expectations, and then some."

If I were to express the personality and attitude of Barks in one word, the most appropriate would be, "fairness." To others, to himself, to the world.

Barks has said more than once that comic collectors only *think* they know him, that they never really could. The man is complex, certainly, as any author of such varied stories would have to be. He is capable of anger, but others rarely see it. His wife Garé commented that she's only seen him really lose his temper once.

NEMO: *Can you elaborate on Carl's "fair" qualities?*

Hamilton: To me, studying Barks's fairness is quite interesting. In being fair to his employers, even as far back as his early days in the Disney studios, while other cartoonists were joking, fraternizing, and generally goofing off by the water-cooler, Barks remained at his drawing board most of the time or would skip the small talk and return to work. Jack Hannah commented in an interview by Jim Korkis that we're running in the next set of the *Barks Library* that he never knew Walt Disney himself to have ever criticized Barks, to have called him down about anything, or to have said anything derogatory about him. And that certainly wasn't the case with many of the studio's other artists!

During the time he worked for Western, one of his former editors said Barks considered quitting on several occasions, but he was always able to talk him out of it. If true, I suspect it was more because of Barks's basic nature than because of any well-reasoned arguments for staying. The industry as a whole grossly underpaid most of their artists, and while much of the art many cartoonists turned out was barely adequate, Barks had his own criteria and didn't know how to compromise. He didn't even seem to think it was fair to his readers—and, by extension, to himself—to get into a comfortable rut and keep doing variations on the same thing over and over again. He searched for new approaches to his craft and he asked himself what he could do to keep from getting repetitious. That is why the level of his work remained so high for so many years, and is even *more* remarkable when you realize he was 40 before he started doing comic-book stories. Most artists get stale by the time Barks was just beginning to learn his craft.

NEMO: *Considering the amount of work he still does, one couldn't actually say Barks is retired, but are his work habits more relaxed now?*

Hamilton: It's difficult for Barks to give less than 100 percent to anything he does. He has never stopped learning. I had the privilege of witnessing his reactions to the lithographic processing of the first new oil painting he did for Another Rainbow. When we were given our royal tour of Alan Lithograph in Inglewood, we suddenly realized we'd lost Carl. Retracing our steps, I found him intently staring at a framed poster on the wall. The golden vase, painted by an old Dutch master, reproduced beautifully. Carl was fascinated; what he was doing, of course, was studying the techniques used to capture that look of real gold. He was planning soon to paint his eighteenth money bin scene with Scrooge, Donald and the nephews busying themselves among all those gold coins and artifacts. I've never heard a collector complain about Barks's handling of the coins in any of his paintings, and they've all been well done, but he's never fully satisfied with anything he does. So, while the rest of us were engaged in small talk, the Duck Man studied his craft.

On our next trip—and by this time we'd gone through the process of duplicating two of his oils—Barks was obviously disturbed because the lithographer had trouble trying to reproduce some of his subtler, blended tones. Barks asked if it would be easier for them if he matched the colors on his palette to the inks they used on press. The foreman said it would, and gave

Barks an ink sample chart. Using this new palette, Barks then painted the portrait of Uncle Scrooge, "Till Death Do Us Part." Oddly, at one point when he was painting Scrooge's coat, he realized that he couldn't get the color he wanted and he returned to his old palette to mix that one color. And, sure enough, Alan wasn't able to get it, so we added a fifth color and finally came pretty close.

NEMO: *How has his relationship been with collectors over the years?*

Hamilton: Very good for the most part. However, people sometimes make the mistake of misjudging Barks's easy going good nature and try to take advantage of him. Collectors, particularly in the old days, tried to get things free from him, and at times he was generous to a fault. But it wasn't fair to himself or to his wife to give away something that had a clearly established market value. So he would occasionally sell something he'd saved over the years. After all, artists do sell their work for a living. But he was never greedy—not at all like Uncle Scrooge! He's still like that today.

The California law on royalties is a good example. In the book we published in 1981 that contained all of Barks's 1970s Disney oil painting (*The Fine Art of Walt Disney's Donald Duck*), we included this paragraph on a page of itself:

> *California has a state law—Civil Code 986—concerning the sale and re-sale of fine art that requires residents to pay artists 5 percent commission on paintings they buy and later resell. Many collectors from all over the country are now honoring the spirit of this law, even though, legally, out-of-staters are not bound by it. They are paying the 5 percent they feel that artists should share in the increasing values of their past efforts. They also feel, as do the publishers of this book, that the law will soon be adopted nationwide.*

The law calls for a no-nonsense, straight 5 percent commission. Clean and simple. But Carl always reasoned that an owner might resell one of his paintings at a loss, or no profit, in which case he wouldn't *want* to take a 5 percent commission. He said he expected no more than 5 percent of the profits. Understandably, the law couldn't have been written that way, because of the endless opportunities to cheat, or to argue about what should be deducted from the profits.

NEMO: *Hasn't Barks remained pretty accessible to fans over the years?*

Hamilton: The amount of time Barks has lost with visitors, time that could have been spent painting, in the last 12 years has been awesome. For a while the couple lived in Goleta, just north of Los Angeles, and then moved near Riverside, to the east of L.A. Fans from Europe, the Orient and from all over the United States called on Carl and Gare, and once inside their door would stay for hours. Interviewers, or fans pretending to be, would ask countless questions; usually the same ones over and over again.

All of these things contributed to the Barkses' decision to move away from California, back north to the area of his boyhood. "Too close to Disneyland," was Carl's response when asked why he chose to move at the age of 82.

NEMO: *Is he glad he made the move?*

Hamilton: I'm happy to report that Carl's looking good, is settled in his new home and says he hasn't felt better in years. Both he and his wife caught colds going to a movie full of hacking and coughing kids watching *Mickey's Christmas Carol*, but outside of that, the cooler weather agrees with them. They're able to spread out in a spacious home and Carl's got a large studio where he can paint with all necessary elbow and leg room and still have all his reference books handy.

NEMO: *Do you have any Barksian anecdotes to share with Nemo's readers?*

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RIGHT: On this and the next page are color concept paintings by Carl Barks for his recent lithograph "An Embarrassment of Riches," displaying his techniques for depicting his subject and experimenting with arrangements.

Hamilton: One of the most unforgettable moments of my association with Carl came in 1977, at the San Diego Comic Convention. Barks was to be one of the honored guests at a star-studded banquet that year and I was asked to introduce him. As they have always known in the legitimate theater, there are certain acts that are difficult to follow, and possibly for that reason, the moment to introduce Barks came *last*. Some of the medium's living legends were in attendance that night. The banquet room was packed. It was, as they say, a night to remember. Sergio Aragones introduced me and I got up there thinking to myself that I was going to have to somehow keep this brief.

I'd had 15 years experience in radio and I'd done some emcee work, too, so I knew a little about the psychology of introducing guests. I knew I didn't want to announce Carl's name until the very last. What I said went something like this:

In a room filled with people who have made their mark in the comics field, it's certainly a pleasure to be able to introduce our honored guest tonight. I'm sure there's no one here who is unfamiliar with his work. Though he didn't create the character of Donald Duck, his name has become synonymous with that Disney character. More remarkable is the fact that one of the truly legendary comic characters is one that he did create, the fabulously wealthy Uncle Scrooge McDuck. There are three things about our honored guest that everyone I've ever talked to agrees with. They like his art. . . they like his writing. . . and they like the man. Ladies and gentlemen, CARL BARKS!" The room exploded! It still gives me a thrill to remember that moment. The entire audience instantly jumped to its feet and gave him the longest standing ovation I've ever witnessed at a comic convention.

I don't think Carl was quite prepared for the intensity of the reaction to his appearance. He stumbled a little getting up the stairs to the platform, but he handled himself well, and we talked for a few minutes. Since he was uncomfortable at the idea of an acceptance speech, I agreed to ask him a few questions and then we sat down. I don't remember one of the questions today, but I do remember Jack Kirby asking for an autograph!

NEMO: *What does Barks think about all this notoriety?*

Hamilton: He's learned to accept each new degree after it's imposed on him, but is never ready for the next one. I think it's because he is not an egoist. He is confident and he takes a fierce pride in his work, but he's always been just enough of a loner—from his early days of anonymity at the Disney Studios to his days of self-chosen isolation as a no-name comic book cartoonist—that he suspects some day he'll wake up and discover that he's really still alone and all this attention was only a dream.

In the early 1970s, when he was doing oil paintings for fans, Barks grew accustomed to the accolades his stories brought from admirers, but he couldn't equate his oils with the phenomenon. He had, after all, been selling non-Disney oil paintings for $15 to $50 in the San Jacinto/Hemet desert-area flea markets, and now he was getting $150, which he considered a tribute to the memory of his stories and the Disney-name connection. He wasn't making much money, but he was ostensibly retired, and to somehow charge more than his fans could afford didn't seem right. Some of us thought, however, he was under-valuing. When his waiting list grew to over a hundred names he reluctantly decided to increase the prices. Even then he didn't want to auction them off; we suspected he didn't want to be embarrassed by a no-bid auction. So he gave Russ and me

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Barks's finished painting, "Embarrassment of Riches." The lithograph of the painting was released by Another Rainbow last year.

three paintings with instructions that we could put them out at $600 apiece, and if they didn't sell, that was okay. He'd just send them off to the next three names on his waiting list.

NEMO: *Even $600 sounds low today for a Barks oil painting!*

Hamilton: *All* of this seems so ridiculous today. After the paintings arrived, Russ and I hesitated before sheepishly confessing to each other that we wanted one for ourselves. We each bought one and a friend promptly bought the third, so we had none to display at the convention!

The night before the con we called Carl, and his wife answered the phone. We told Garé all three paintings were sold and the convention hadn't yet begun. They were ecstatic! "Who bought them?" Carl asked, probably thinking he would recognize the names.

"Well, *we* bought two of them ourselves," we confessed.

That did it. We'd put our money where our mouths were. All resistance was gone, and Barks numbly agreed to begin auctioning them off. And the rest is history.

NEMO: *The escalation in prices after that was pretty spectacular, wasn't it?*

Hamilton: When we published *The Fine Art of Walt Disney's Donald Duck*, which collected all 122 of his 1970s Disney oils, the prices had grown to unbelievable heights, the top sale at that time having reached $42,000. Two or three paintings have surpassed that figure since then, and where it will all end, only time, availability, and the economy will determine.

NEMO: *Barks has already been interviewed by* Time *and* Newsweek. *With all the upcoming emphasis on Donald Duck's 50th birthday, we're sure his name will come up more and more.*

Hamilton: Barks has pretty much had enough interviews to last him from now on. He realizes how much is going to be written about him in the remaining eight sets of the *Library* and that we're going to have to go over some of the old ground one more time, but we're hoping, as I'm sure he is, that our encyclopaedia of his works will be the definitive word on Barks. But it's surprising, with all that has been written about the man, how we've come up with a significant amount of really new material.

The number one reference source for Barks during the 1940s and 1950s was the *National Geographic*. We've discovered 30 to 40 examples of material he used in his one-shots from "Pirate Gold" to "Lost in the Andes." Probably half of them were unknown before. Tom Andrae and Geoffrey Blum, our contributing editors, have done a remarkable job digging out this obscure stuff. The *National Geographic* has been very cooperative, too, providing us with copyright clearance and black-and-white glossies or color film from those original issues.

NEMO: *The first set of the Barks Library didn't reprint any of the long Donald Duck and Uncle Scrooge adventures, did it?*

Hamilton: The first set of the *Library* reprinted 63 of Carl's short ten-pagers from *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories*. I really think that this period, 1948 to 1954, was Barks's real Golden Age. His art and story-telling was honed to near perfection. Again, Andrae and Blum's essays, and one by Prof. Don Ault, probed the stories and Barks's working methods with scholarly depth. The articles also contain direct quotes from Barks that are often as entertaining to read as the captions in his stories.

NEMO: *What are you planning to publish in the Library sets besides his comic-book stories?*

Hamilton: One of the little-known areas of Barks's history has been his involvement with the Disney Studios as an animator. Most of his fans knew he worked there from the mid-1930s until he began working on the comics, but they didn't know exactly what he did, and had never seen any of the work he did.

We took Carl to the Disney Archives about a year and a half ago, and we looked at file after file of old storyboard and idea sketches as well as stacks of drawings done for cartoon films that were abandoned; we were able to identify quite a bit that he had done. Since nothing was signed—and after all, none of those pencil idea sketches were ever drawn to be displayed or reproduced—there were a few that Barks couldn't positively identify. Sometimes he'd remember doing a gag we were looking at, and would recall conversations about it.

Carl's memory is really remarkable: Consider the tens of thousands of drawings he's done over the last half century. He was considered the fastest of the story-idea men among his group and he was often the one who quickly sketched up the first germ of an idea.

We took some of his best sketches from three famous cartoons, "Good Scouts," "Hockey Champ," and "Firechief," and matched them with film clips from the actual cartoons to compare how Carl envisioned a gag and the animator's interpretation on celuloid. In every case the Barks drawings had more personality, life and action to them than what appeared on the screen! We discovered another interesting fact when we compared *his* work to final films and measured the results against other artists' idea sketches and how their drawings related to final films.

Invariably, the animators copied what Carl did far more closely. With many of the other idea men, they took the basic gags and re-interpreted them. But with Barks, it was as if they struggled for several frames trying to capture what he did in one drawing.

NEMO: *Did you find a lot of storyboard sketches from other cartoons by Barks?*

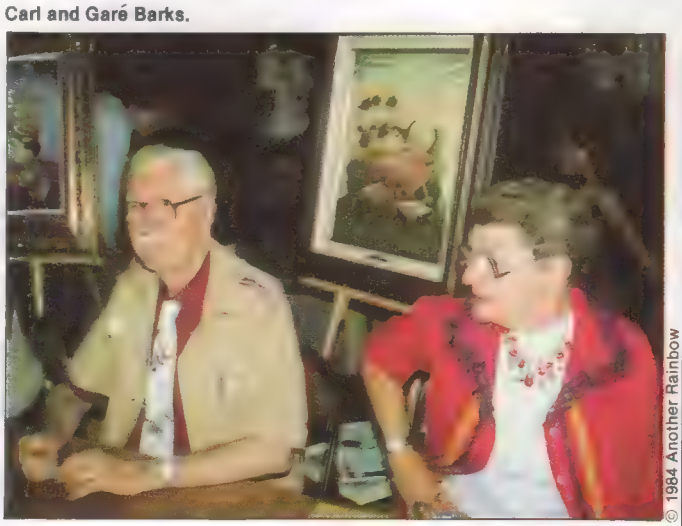
Hamilton: We have much more of this type of material that we'll run in future sets of the Library, and we have some of the ones of greatest interest coming right up in the second set.

NEMO: *What are some special features that you've gotten for the first set?*

Hamilton: We've got a great full-page photograph of Barks hugging Donald Duck. The making of that picture is a story in itself.

The occasion was historic. On what turned out to be Walt Disney's 82nd birthday, December 5, 1982, Another Rainbow hosted a catered dinner at the home of collector Malcolm Willits in Pasadena. We wanted a dinner honoring the two Disney

Carl and Garé Barks.



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giants, Floyd Gottfredson and Carl Barks, who one of the top executives at Disney once described as being their "pre-eminent men of letters." We chose the occasion as marking the combined 100 years of association by the two artists with Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Walt Disney Productions. It was a pretty lavish affair, with filet mignon and cornish hen and around 60 invited guests, including various officials from the Disney organization and many artists and friends who've touched the lives of Floyd and Carl over the years.

The highlight of the evening was during dessert when Mickey and Donald, direct from Disneyland, surprised everyone with their sudden appearance, walking into the dining room carrying a large, sculptured cake molded in the image of the Mouse and the Duck. We got a lot of great pictures, including the front cover of this issue of *NEMO*.

Photos from that evening and others will be highlighted in color in a deluxe limited edition book Another Rainbow plans to release later this year, to be called *Mickey Mouse in Color*. It will be signed by *both* Floyd Gottfredson and Carl Barks, and will contain work by both.

NEMO: *Will Gottfredson's contribution include some of his early Mickey Mouse strips?*

Hamilton: Gottfredson's contribution will begin with 60 pages of his best early *Mickey* Sunday page adventures from the early 1930s in full color and full size, *exactly* the size the original Sunday halves appeared. What's really exciting is reprinting them with all of the original coloring—they're gorgeous! The color work is being taken from the sole existing set of slick proofs in existence today, from the Disney Archives.

We're also planning to publish a half dozen watercolors of Mickey Mouse that Gottfredson has painted since his retirement.

NEMO: *You said the book will be by both Gottfredson and Barks. . .*

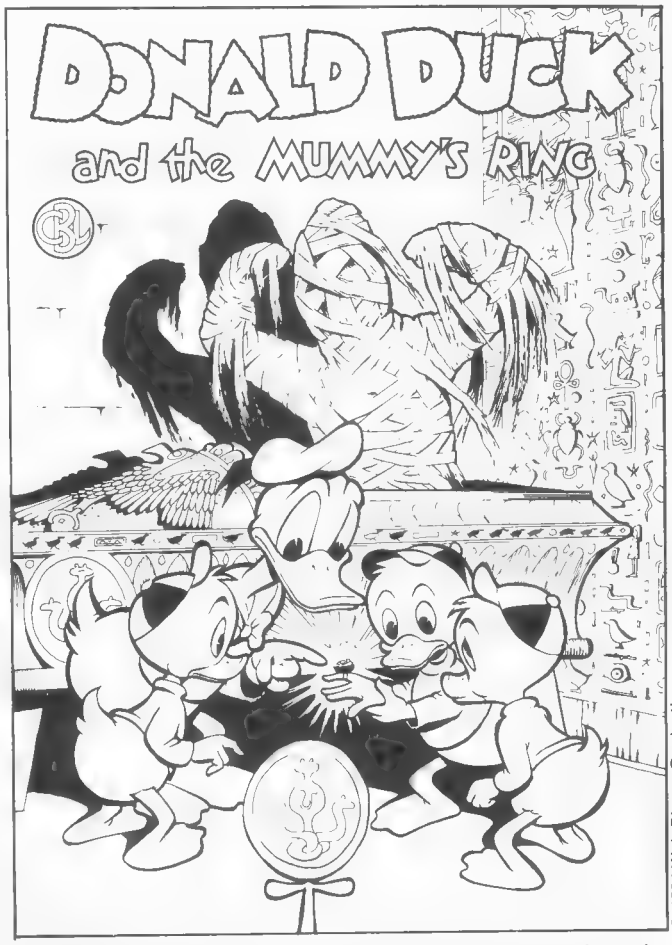
Hamilton: Barks's half of the book will begin, logically, with "The Riddle of the Red Hat"—the only Mickey Mouse comic book story he ever did—and will be in full color, of course. The big scoop on Barks, though, will be "Northwest Mounted," which was intended as a Mickey Mouse cartoon short, that he wrote completely by himself in 1936 before he went into the Duck shorts full time. We have all of the storyboards from the archives and are going to print most of them, many in color. The cartoon was never produced, one of 600 titles in the archives that have been shelved over the years. The story is flawed, but it clearly shows the talents of blossoming learner.

A very special addition will be two Mickey Mouse drawings Barks submitted to Disney in 1935 that got him his job and resulted in his move to Hollywood from his home in Minneapolis. They are the earliest Barks Disney drawings in existence and will be a real surprise to fans. Barks is less enthusiastic about this book than is Gottfredson, but that's predictable. All of Carl's stuff is early, when he was still feeling his way. Floyd, on the other hand, was at the height of his form.

The day after the historic party in Pasadena, we corralled the two artists at the apartment of the Gottfredsons, and did the first half of a four-hour interview. The complete edited transcript will be published in the book. We pointedly asked questions both men could answer to keep the interview well-rounded and to get answers that the two might feed off that are new and fresh. Their answers were better than any I could have dreamed up!

For instance, both men claimed their best story had the same title! (We won't divulge it here, but some buffs will be able to figure it out.) Floyd told about his story first, and it was Carl who laid the bombshell. What a classic piece of tape! I've thought on occasion that it would make a great cassette. Maybe sometime we can put it on a 45 r.p.m. record and put it in a special sleeve in one of our books!

Despite the fame of *Mickey Mouse*, Gottfredson isn't as well-known to fandom as Barks. The strip's continuity stories ended in the mid-1950s, and Floyd had stopped being involved in the plotting of the scripts a dozen years before that, so a lot of what fandom has seen isn't up to the standards of the really great Gottfredson work from the 1930s. We're hoping that this book, *Mickey Mouse in Color*, will win a lot of new Gottfredson admirers. Walt Disney Productions has agreed to let us do a *Gottfredson Mickey Mouse Library* as well as the *Barks Library*, so we're letting this color book kick it off. If it does well, we may publish more Mickey books in color. At this time I'd guess we'll probably start the *Gottfredson Library* in 1985.



The slipcase cover to Set I of *The Carl Barks Library*, a 1984 release, is Barks's dramatic new cover interpretation of the full-length *Donald Duck* adventure he drew 41 years ago. Opposite is Barks's color study.

NEMO: *Hasn't there been some controversy about the fact that not all of the Donald Duck and Uncle Scrooge stories will be reprinted in the Barks Library? Haven't some of them been banned?*

Hamilton: First, I want to set the record straight on one thing: we've never advertised *any*where that the *Library* would be complete. It's an impossible statement to make for several reasons. First, not all the comic book work Barks did was Disney, so none of that will appear. Second, his one *Mickey Mouse* comic will appear elsewhere. Third, just what is "complete"? We're publishing material many fans would term "complete." What about his unpublished stories, his animation art, the drawings he's done for fans, the published work in other than comic books, the two or three foreign things he's done?

When we first got the license from Disney, we understood that a few of the later Uncle Scrooge stories were on a banned for reprint list. We really didn't understand the full significance of that at the time and weren't even sure that it applied to us. However, we were quite surprised—shocked may be a better word—when we found out that 16 stories had been banned over the years for various reasons, including two or three of the most famous Donald Duck stories Barks ever did! Our impassioned plea did not fall on deaf ears, I'm happy to report.

After careful review, Disney decided to lift the reprint ban on half of the stories, but—*not* the three "biggies." So, again we returned to the executive offices to see what could be salvaged out of the remaining eight. To our relief we learned that in most cases the problems were not major. In the "Race to the South

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Published in 1983 on the slipcase for Set VIII of *The Carl Barks Library*, this was the first cover for *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* that Barks had drawn in 14 years.

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Donald Duck sees red! This cover originally appeared on *Walt Disney's Comics and Stories* 140, May 1952, but with the Duck's pupils filled in as solid black. The original drawing reveals that Barks intended for the pupils to be colored red.

Seas," for instance, the whole problem centered on two panels, which can easily be corrected by Barks. Carl has agreed to work with us to edit out the problems and work on them until we get Disney's permission to reprint them. I want to stress that these changes are *not* that big a deal. In some cases they only involve text, perhaps the use of names or phrases that would be politically sensitive in some areas of the world today. These are changes that won't affect the humor of Barks's stories or their plots. So they just aren't that important. In fact, these changes are a lot *less* significant than some of the changes that Western made during his years employed there.

NEMO: *Do you have other publishing projects planned?*

Hamilton: As far as long-range projects are concerned, we'd like to do a follow-up to the *Mickey Mouse in Color* book, perhaps a *Donald Duck in Color*—lots of possibilities, something on the order of a *Best of The Carl Barks Library* type of book, selecting certain stories to print in *good* color. By "good" I don't mean the garish stuff you see in most of the so-called quality reprints.

I'd like to mention, especially since we were talking earlier about "Race to the South Seas," that the third set of the *Barks Library* scheduled for later in 1984 is planning to feature the *March of Comics* and *Firestone* giveaways. I think it'll be one of our best sets. And, if everything goes as planned, we'll be printing "Darkest Africa" and "Race to the South Seas" in full color. What a dynamite book that will be! Most collectors haven't even *seen* the giveaways and they are definitely some of Carl's best.

We're also planning to continue the series of lithographs by Carl Barks that have been so enthusiastically received so far. The fourth in the series, scheduled for release on Donald Duck's 50th birthday, will show a scene at an Antique Car Auction. Carl's idea was to show an auction right at the moment a 1934 classic is being auctioned off, with Donald and the boys arriving in the duck's perennial convertible with the 313 license plate. The connection, of course, is that Donald himself is the 1934 classic. There will be some interesting *firsts* in this painting. Mickey Mouse will be the auctioneer, his first appearance in a Barks oil. Other characters sitting and standing among the antique cars will be Grandma Duck; Gladstone; Gyro Gearloose, and his little lightbulb helper; Horace Horsecollar; Clara Cluck; Gus Goose; Daisy; her nieces April and May and June; Pluto; old Yellowbeak; and even Cheltenham the chipmunk. Quite a rally! Carl will probably begin a fifth oil, an adventure theme of some sort, for release next fall.

NEMO: *Wasn't there some talk once about a Disney price guide?*

Hamilton: Another Rainbow's announced for some time now that it's going to do a *Walt Disney Collectibles Price Guide*. Part of our problem is that we're understaffed. Either that, or we're taking on too much. Work has been progressing on it slower than we'd hoped, and I don't envision its release before 1985.

The company has other projects in the wind, too, but enough sometimes is too much, as an old-time comedian used to say, so we'll save those announcements for another time. n

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WEIRD SCIENCE

The complete 22-issue run of **WEIRD SCIENCE** features the artwork of Wally Wood, Joe Orlando, Al Williamson (some with Frazetta), editor/scripter Al Feldstein. Some of the stories are EC adaptations of work by Ray Bradbury. When **WEIRD SCIENCE** was cancelled, EC continued publishing science fiction in the comic **WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY** (later titled **INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION**).
Four volumes in slipcase, ppd. $85
(SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: $70.)

WEIRD FANTASY

Companion set to the **COMPLETE WEIRD SCIENCE**, this Feldstein-edited title also ran 22 issues and features the same line-up of artists (and adds Severin and Elder) and Bradbury adaptations. It was also discontinued by EC and once again the thread was picked up in the title **WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY**.
Four volumes in slipcase, ppd. $85
(SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: $70.)

WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY

EC's final sf title, it featured work by the cream of EC's artists of the fantastic, including Wally Wood, Al Williamson, Joe Orlando, and adding Bernie Krigstein and Jack Davis. It's first issue was numbered 23, which continues the numbering from the two cancelled comics **WEIRD SCIENCE** and **WEIRD FANTASY** (both of which expired with #22). This comic was renamed **INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION** with #30. The final issue was #33, ending an eleven issue run.
Two volumes in slipcase, ppd. $55
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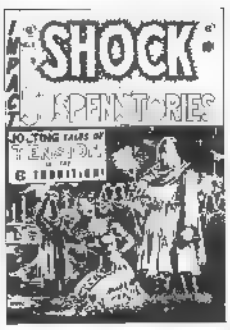

SHOCK SUSPENSTORIES

These eighteen comics contain stories which range from the twist-ending short story to *film noir*-like thrillers to socially relevant pieces which are, in the words of critic Bhob Stewart, a "head-on collision with the real issues of American life." Among the artists represented here are Wally Wood, Joe Orlando, Jack Davis, George Evans and Reed Crandall.
Three volumes in slipcase, ppd. $70.
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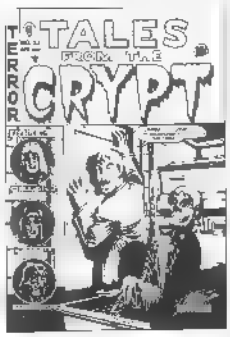
CRYPT



One of three horror titles published by EC (another one, **VAULT OF HORROR**, is now available in this series, see right. The third, **HAUNT OF FEAR**, is yet to be published), this Feldstein-edited comic featured artwork by many EC favorites including Feldstein, Jack Davis, "Ghastly" Graham Ingels, Johnny Craig and (in later issues) Bernie Krigstein. Originally titled **CRYPT OF TERROR**, it was renamed **TALES FROM THE CRYPT**, and ran 30 issues.
Five volumes in slipcase, ppd. $100
(SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: $80.)

THE VAULT OF HORROR

Another in the trio of EC's horror titles, the 29-issue run of **VAULT** was edited by Johnny Craig, who not only did practically every "Vault Keeper" story but *all* the covers! Once again, EC's staple horror artists appear here, including Al Feldstein, Jack Davis, Graham Ingels and eventually Bernie Krigstein.
Five volumes in slipcase, ppd. $100.
(SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: $80.)

PANIC

12 issues, the companion title to MAD. Edited by Feldstein (the editor of MAD magazine since 1956) and featuring many of the MAD comic crew. Humor in a varicose vein!
Two volumes in slipcase, ppd. $55.
(SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: $45.)

FRONTLINE

This Kurtzman-edited comic features work by him and other action-oriented comic EC artists; Jack Davis, John Severin (or the Severin-Bill Elder team) and Wally Wood. Sprinkled throughout are Kurtzman's special Civil War stories, like all his EC war work historical accuracy is a hallmark.
Three volumes in slipcase, ppd. $70.
(SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: $60.)

CRIME SUSPENSTORIES

The 27 issues comprise five volumes, packaged in a deluxe slipcase with all the quality you have come to expect! The emphasis is pulpy-crime drama of the James M. Cain type, with the Feldstein flavor and the distinctive EC slant. Artists included in this collection are primarily Craig, Ingels, Davis, Wood, Kamen, Evans, and Krigstein.
Five volumes in slipcase, ppd. $100
(SUBSCRIPTION PRICE: $80.)

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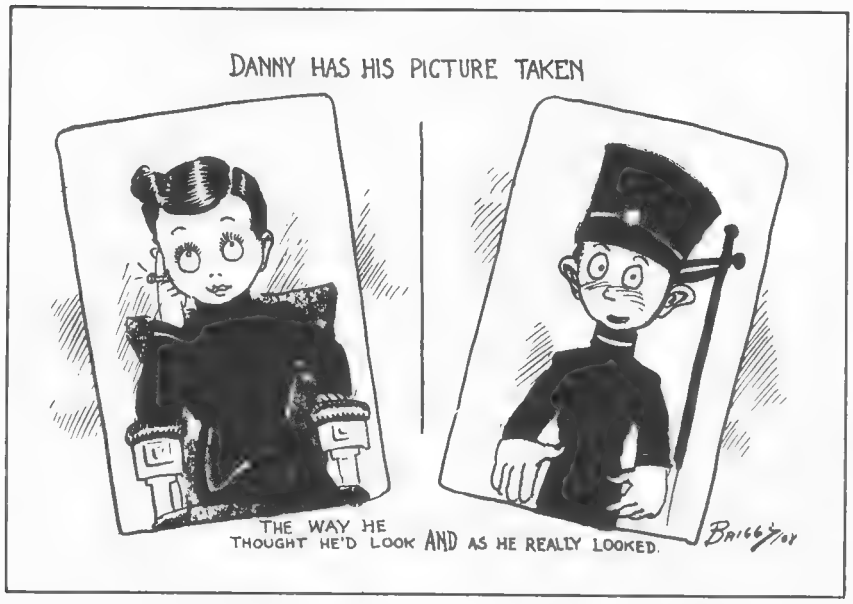
The Two Worlds Of Danny Dreamer



In the early days of comic strips, there were tramps and clowns, cops and pranksters, but it took Clare Briggs to depict the everyday man and day-dreaming kids.

by Mark Johnson

fantasy in the comics

Clare Briggs began his long cartooning career in the early 1890s when he contributed to the *Western Penman*; when 21 he began serious newspaper work as an illustrator of news stories for the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* for $10 a week.

Two years later, in 1898, he joined the *St. Louis Chronicle*, one link of the Scripps newspaper chain. During that year came the Spanish-American war, and Briggs, as the paper's editorial artist, concentrated his efforts on war subjects. At the end of the war, he was released by the *Chronicle*, and he left St. Louis.

He arrived in New York City in search of greener pastures, resulting in a succession of small jobs, including sign painting and catalogue illustrations, before selling to the Pulitzer organization. This, his first nationally published work, was of small spot cartoons in the *World's* Funny Side comic section during 1899 and 1900.

After a brief trip back to his adopted hometown of Lincoln, Nebraska in 1900, where he married Ruth Owen, he returned to New York and resumed his career, doing freelance work including spot art for the S.S. McClure Syndicate's comic section, in 1901. His first "break" came during this period when he joined William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal*—in the role of news sketch-artist again. Soon, however, he received more cartoon than news assignments; since photos were now dominating newspaper art such a proclivity was not without its benefits—or future.

Hearst saw a need for a cartoonist for his new paper, the *Chicago American*, which he founded in 1902, and Briggs was sent there after only a few weeks of tenure with Hearst. It was on the *American* that Briggs created the legendary daily strip experiment, *A. Piker, Clerk*, in 1903. But for the record: It wasn't really daily, but rather a haphazard series that ran in weekday editions.

In 1907, Briggs was lured to the *Chicago Tribune* by its go-getting comic-section editor, James Keeley. He gave Briggs his first opportunity to draw a full-page Sunday comic. That page was *Danny Dreamer*, which debuted on December first.

Danny was a messenger boy who manifested his surname by dreaming that the recipient of a telegram he delivers will reward him with a fabulous present, or let him participate in something glamorous, such as a ball game or a circus act. But Danny always ends up disappointed and defeated.

It was a highly imaginative strip, even in that era when there were many similar strips, such as *Little Nemo*, *Mooney Miggles*, and *The Bad Dream That Made Bill a Better Boy*. Briggs employed more of a structured storyline than the rest.

The basic *Dream* strip featured Danny dreaming of himself in a bizarre situation, perhaps a dangerous one—and the only escape was to awaken. Danny was a daydreamer, never actually asleep in any episode. He was really just a boy given to wild anticipations. Danny could also be an optimist, soundly deflated, or a pessimist richly and promptly rewarded, for his efforts.

In spite of the series' cleverness, Briggs evidently tired of the formula, and on Sept. 24, 1911, the strip became *Danny Dreamer Senior*, a fellow who daydreamed just like his son; but instead of being a mature boy, he's a childish adult. Soon the strip became stranger still.

On Dec. 10, 1911, Mr. Dreamer is joined by a fat, dim-witted Negro named Sambo Remo Rastus Brown, dressed in a bellhop uniform. Brown had previously appeared in the *Tribune* daily sports page on occasion, starring in continuities about attending the World Series and similar adventures.

The premise of the new strip with Dreamer, Senior and Brown is that Brown desperately wants to help Dreamer Sr., but at the same time he tries to avoid him. A weird story lasting many weeks showed Dreamer Sr. going through an ocean voyage and shipwreck on a desert island to escape the dogged Mr. Brown, to no avail.

From Oct. 13, 1912 to early 1913, Briggs decided to give the whole strip over to Sambo Brown, dumping Dreamer Senior, and making Brown a bumbling policeman, by this time a well-trodden path (since C.W. Kahles's great creation, *Clarence the Cop*). This was Briggs's last try at the outlandish vaudeville-type farces that were popular strip fare in those days. He left Chicago to return once again to New York.

In 1914, Briggs began a panel series for the New York Tribune. The feature had no regular characters, and several running titles with a variety of subjects. This technique was already in use by such artists as Maurice Ketten, H.T. Webster, and Robert Ripley (before *Believe It or Not*).

Briggs's panels were never overly exaggerated; they were mirrors of everyday life, mixtures of reality and humor. He dealt with real people and real situations. These genre panels were masterful studies of everyday people in life's comedies.

But at the opposite end of the spectrum—as shown in the classic *Danny Dreamer*—Briggs could rival Winsor MacCay in capturing the dream world of kids.

(In a future issue, NEMO will feature Briggs's "second" career, and his variety of genre panels.) n

Danny Dreamer

Copyright 1908 by Tribune Company, Chicago, Illinois.

GEE I'VE GOT A HUNCH I COULD BE A CARTOONIST
LEARN TO DRAW BE A CARTOONIST BIG DEMAND FOR NEWSPAPER ARTISTS HAVE YOU GOT TALENT? WRITE US AT ONCE EXPERIENCE NOT NECESSARY
DANNY HAD AN IDEA THE CARTOONIST'S LIFE WAS LIKE THIS — OH JOY!
I JUST DASHED THAT OFF
GREAT! G-R-E-A-T!! YOU'RE HIRED - GET BUSY!
PLANT ME AMONG THE GIRLS PLANT ME
THIS WILL BE THE SENSATION TOMORROW
IT WILL PUSH OUR CIRCULATION UP — I MOVE WE INCREASE DANNY'S SALARY
HE'S THE BEST CARTOONIST IN THE WORLD -
OH WHAT A CLEVER CARTOON TEE HEE HEE
HAW HAW- HAW- HUH GEE BUT THAT DREAMER IS CLEVER-
AIN'T THAT RIGHT THAT'S A GREAT EXPRESSION HE'S GOT ON THE COWS FACE
HAVE YOU SEEN DREAMERS CARTOON THIS MORNING?
HAW HAW- HAW- HAW! THAT DREAMER IS ONE CLEVER DOG- HAW HAW HAW
OH TEE HEE HEE TEE HEE HEE I AM GOING TO SEND FOR THAT ORIGINAL -
WELL HAVE TO HIRE DREAMER THE NEXT TIME YOU RUN FOR PRESIDENT - HE'S TOO MUCH FOR US
I MAY AS WELL WITH DRAW - THIS CARTOON OF DREAMERS THIS MORNING KILLS MY CHANCES FOR ELECTION
OUR CIRCULATION OVER THE MILLION MARK SINCE DREAMER STARTED TO WORK FOR US
I HAVE INCREASED HIS SALARY TO FIFTY THOUSAND A YEAR AND BOARD - HE GETS A LOT OF OFFERS
PRETTY SOFT- PRETTY SOFT
TOO BAD! DANNY'S DREAM IS O'ER! IT ALL HAPPENED LIKE THIS - REALLY!
I WANT TO SEE THE HEAD ARTIST- I—
SIT DOWN HE'S BUSY
ART
I VISH FOR TO HAF A CONVERSATIONS MIT DER ART BOSS ON PRIVATE PIZNESS IF—
SIT DOWN HE'S BUSY
AH-H-
OO O
MM M M
HE IS DER CARTOONIST
I GUESS I WON'T WAIT- I HAVE AN ENGAGEMENT
THIS CARTOON IS SIMPLY PUNK- P-U-N-K- PUNK-
WHAT'S THE IDEA-?
YOU'RE A PEACH! DON'T THINK
VELL I GUESS I VON'T VAIT
WHO I SAID YOU COULD DRAW—?
OUGHT TO HAVE A FIRST CLASS JOB IN THE LAKE—
NOW— CUT OUT THIS MONKEY WORK-
NO SIR IT AINT ME
WHO WANTS— TO SEE ?!
BRIGGS—08

DANNY DREAMER SR.
AND
SAMBO REMO RASTUS BROWN

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SAMBO IM EXPECTING A COARSE RUDE PERSON UP HERE SOON AND WHILE HE'S HERE I WANT YOU TO CARRY IN A SACK OF SAND AND A SACK OF COAL GIVING HIM THE IDEA S GOLD AND BULLION SEE ?
YASSUH MISTAH DREAMAH- AH SHO' KNOWS DAT GAME -

YASSUH! HIS A COMIN
NOW! VOT I VUNT TO KNOW ISS DIS!!! VEN ARE YOU GOING TO PAY DER RENT UP?
SAM! BRING IN THAT SACK OF COIN - I'LL PAY THIS LITTLE RENT OF YOURS! IT IS VERY TRIFLING

YASSUH MISTAH DREAMAH! REAH IS DE GOOD OLE COIN OF DE RELLUM!
!?
LAY IT IN THE CORNER SAM AND BRING UP THE SACK OF BULLION - OH - HAH - HUM!!

MISTER TREAMER BLEASE ACCEPT MINE APOLOGIES. DERE ISS NO BIG HURRY UP FOR DOT RENT
NO NO! MR. SHULTZ - YOU HAVE INJURED MY FEELINGS! I SHALL GIVE YOU THIS LITTLE SUM -

HAH HO! SOAK HIM MISTAH DREAMAH!
LET ME EXPLAIN MR. SHULTZ
YES! I HEF INJURED YOUR FEELINGS - VELL NOW I GIF YOUR FACE..SOME INJURY YOU BET!

Danny Dreamer.

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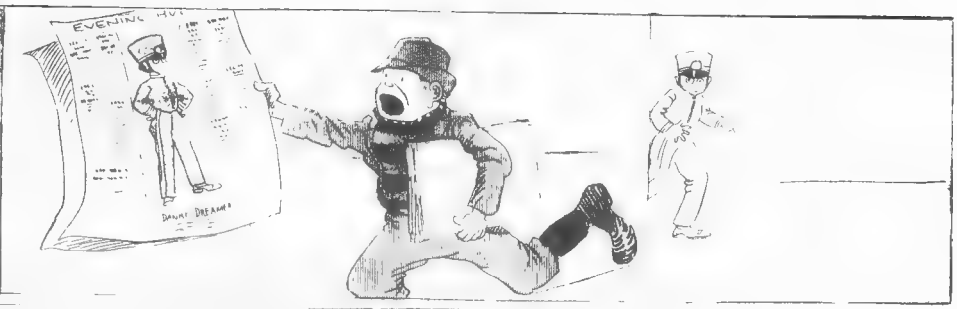
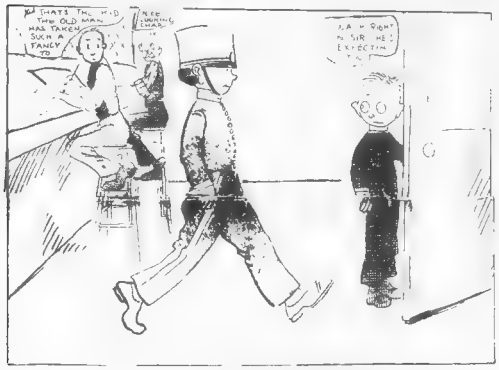
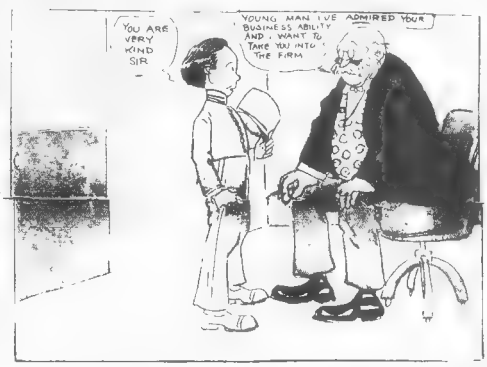


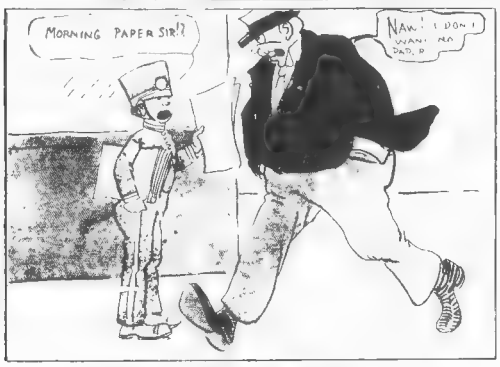
DANNY IS WILLING TO START BUSINESS HUMBLY LIKE ALL GREAT MEN. LIKE THIS HE THINKS

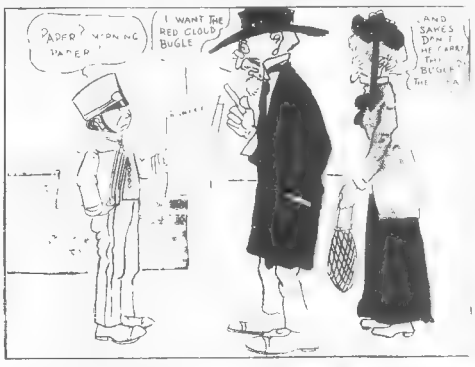
MY SON- TRUE GREATNESS IS NOT REACHED AT A SINGLE BOUND. OUR GREATEST STATESMEN AND MEN OF LARGE INTERESTS BEGAN AS BOOTBLACKS, FARM LADS OR NEWSBOYS PROFIT BY THEIR EXAMPLE MY SON

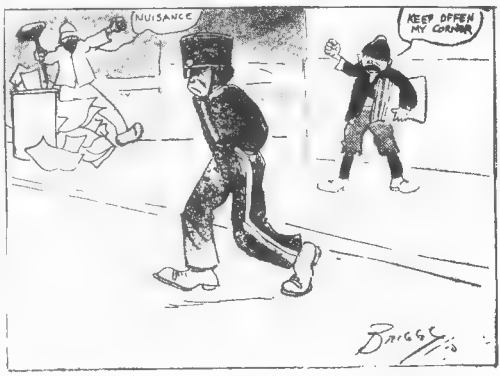




BUT. DANNY'S REAL EXPERIENCE WAS HUMBLE INDEED! THIS IS WHAT HE REALIZED ON THE PRETTY DREAM





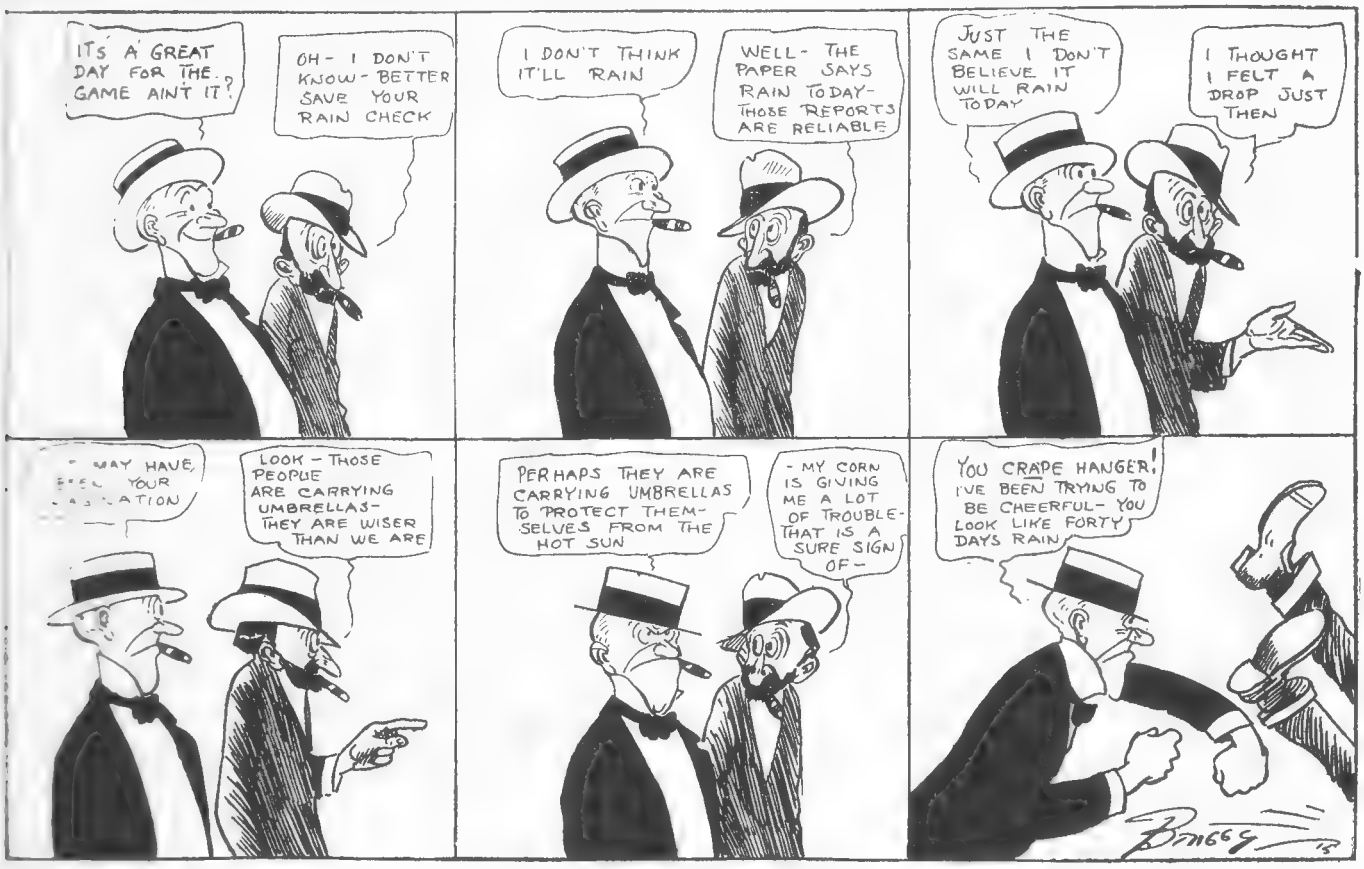


Ain't It a Grand and Glorious Feelin'? . . . . . By BRIGGS

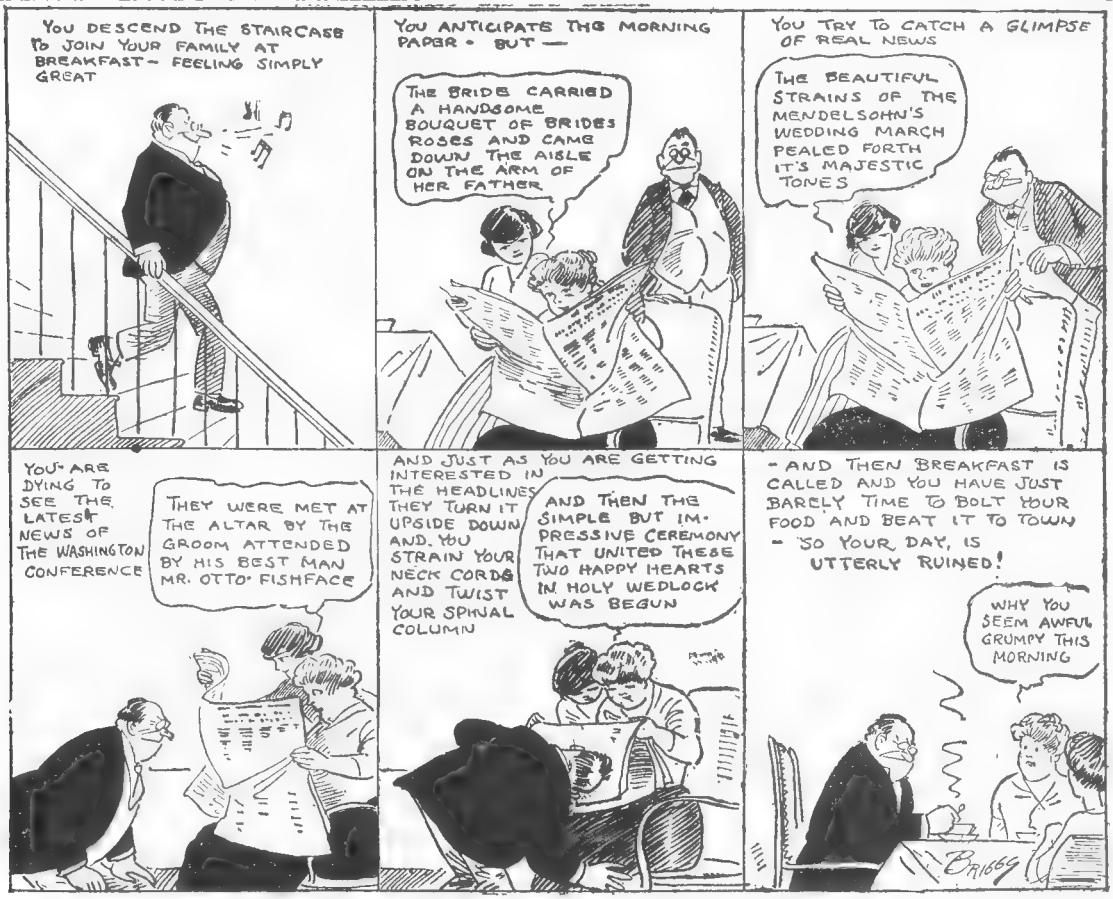
WHEN YOU WAKE UP AND FIND YOU HAVE ONLY A FIGHTING CHANCE TO CATCH YOUR TRAIN
-AND RUSH FEVERISHLY THROUGH A SO-CALLED BREAKFAST
-AND DASH MADLY OUT OF THE HOUSE
-AND TEAR WILDLY UP TO THE STATION -
BUT SEE BY YOUR WATCH THAT YOU'VE MISSED IT BY A MINUTE
WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN A FRIEND INFORMS YOU THE TRAIN IS TEN MINUTES LATE
OH-H-H AIN'T IT A GRAN-ND AND GLOR-YUS FEELIN ?!-?!
TATA
BRIGGS '25
T.G.T. 2ND

Examples of the masterful daily panels with which Briggs captured —and mirrored—America during the Teens and Twenties.

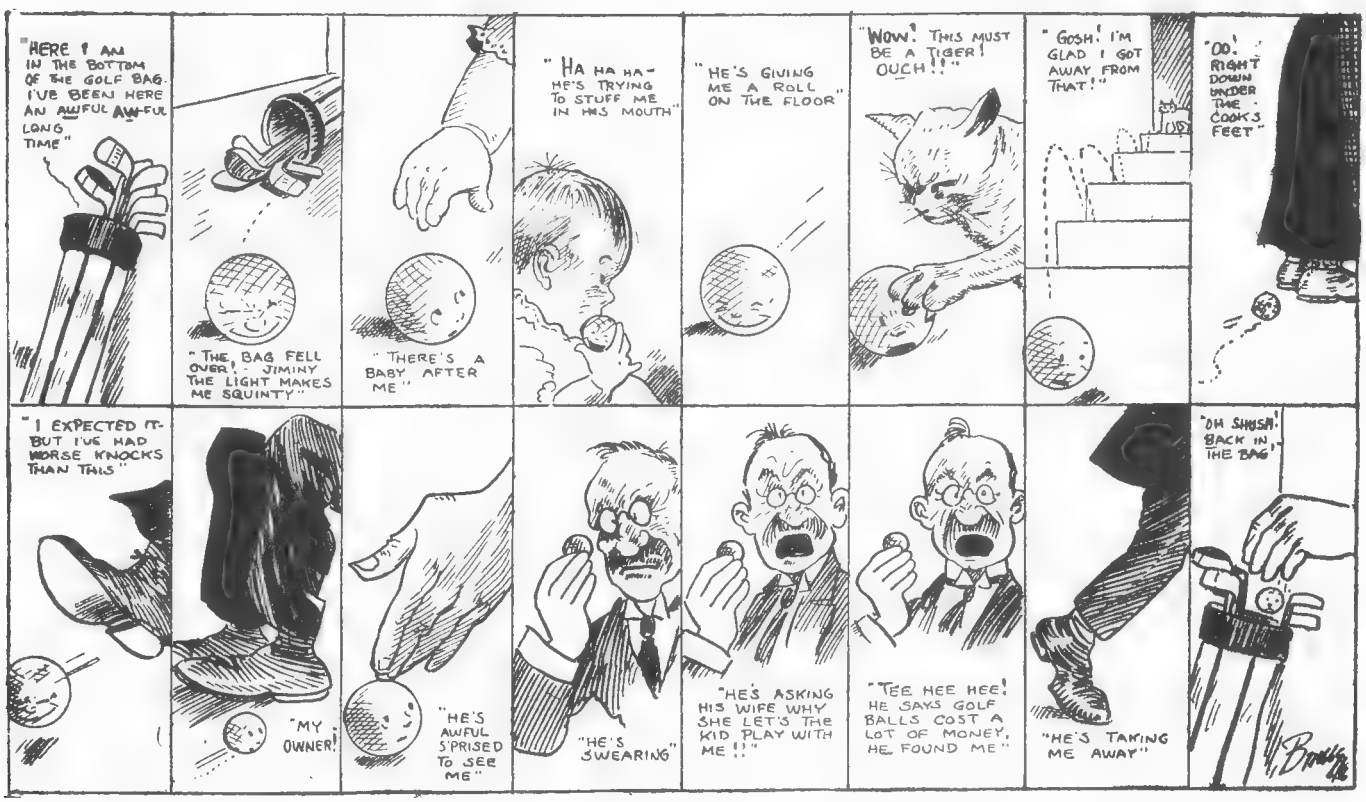
Somebody Is Always Taking the Joy Out of Life . . . . . By BRIGGS

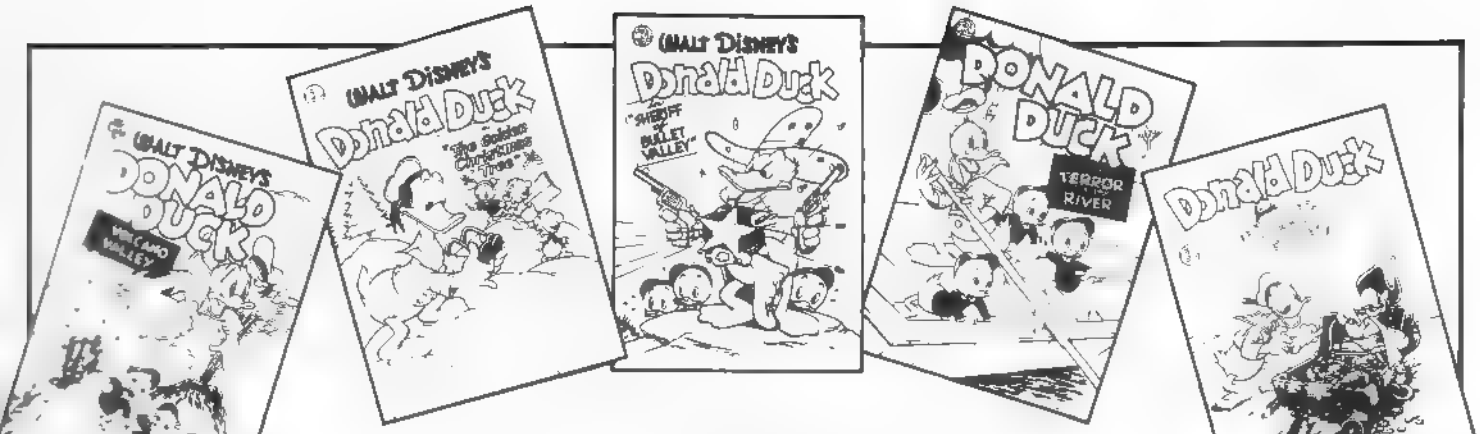

IT'S A GREAT DAY FOR THE GAME AIN'T IT?
OH- I DON'T KNOW- BETTER SAVE YOUR RAIN CHECK
I DON'T THINK IT'LL RAIN
WELL- THE PAPER SAYS RAIN TODAY- THOSE REPORTS ARE RELIABLE
JUST THE SAME I DON'T BELIEVE IT WILL RAIN TODAY
I THOUGHT I FELT A DROP JUST THEN
LOOK - THOSE PEOPLE ARE CARRYING UMBRELLAS- THEY ARE WISER THAN WE ARE
PERHAPS THEY ARE CARRYING UMBRELLAS TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM THE HOT SUN
- MY CORN IS GIVING ME A LOT OF TROUBLE- THAT IS A SURE SIGN OF-
YOU CRAPE HANGER! I'VE BEEN TRYING TO BE CHEERFUL- YOU LOOK LIKE FORTY DAYS RAIN
BRIGGS '15

How to Start the Day Wrong! - - - - - By Briggs


YOU DESCEND THE STAIRCASE TO JOIN YOUR FAMILY AT BREAKFAST - FEELING SIMPLY GREAT
YOU ANTICIPATE THE MORNING PAPER - BUT —
THE BRIDE CARRIED A HANDSOME BOUQUET OF BRIDES ROSES AND CAME DOWN THE AISLE ON THE ARM OF HER FATHER
YOU TRY TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF REAL NEWS
THE BEAUTIFUL STRAINS OF THE MENDELSOHN'S WEDDING MARCH PEALED FORTH IT'S MAJESTIC TONES
YOU ARE DYING TO SEE THE LATEST NEWS OF THE WASHINGTON CONFERENCE
THEY WERE MET AT THE ALTAR BY THE GROOM ATTENDED BY HIS BEST MAN MR. OTTO FISHFACE
AND JUST AS YOU ARE GETTING INTERESTED IN THE HEADLINES THEY TURN IT UPSIDE DOWN AND YOU STRAIN YOUR NECK CORDS AND TWIST YOUR SPINAL COLUMN
AND THEN THE SIMPLE BUT IMPRESSIVE CEREMONY THAT UNITED THESE TWO HAPPY HEARTS IN HOLY WEDLOCK WAS BEGUN
- AND THEN BREAKFAST IS CALLED AND YOU HAVE JUST BARELY TIME TO BOLT YOUR FOOD AND BEAT IT TO TOWN - SO YOUR DAY, IS UTTERLY RUINED!
WHY YOU SEEM AWFUL GRUMPY THIS MORNING
BRIGGS

Adventures of a Little Golf Ball at Home . . . . . By BRIGGS.


"HERE I AM IN THE BOTTOM OF THE GOLF BAG. I'VE BEEN HERE AN AWFUL AWFUL LONG TIME"
"THE BAG FELL OVER! - JIMINY THE LIGHT MAKES ME SQUINTY"
"THERE'S A BABY AFTER ME"
"HA HA HA - HE'S TRYING TO STUFF ME IN HIS MOUTH"
"HE'S GIVING ME A ROLL ON THE FLOOR"
"WOW! THIS MUST BE A TIGER! OUCH!!"
"GOSH! I'M GLAD I GOT AWAY FROM THAT!"
"OO! RIGHT DOWN UNDER THE COOK'S FEET"
"I EXPECTED IT - BUT I'VE HAD WORSE KNOCKS THAN THIS"
"MY OWNER!"
"HE'S AWFUL S'PRISED TO SEE ME"
"HE'S SWEARING"
"HE'S ASKING HIS WIFE WHY SHE LET'S THE KID PLAY WITH ME!!"
"TEE HEE HEE! HE SAYS GOLF BALLS COST A LOT OF MONEY, HE FOUND ME"
"HE'S TAKING ME AWAY"
"OH SHUSH! BACK IN THE BAG"



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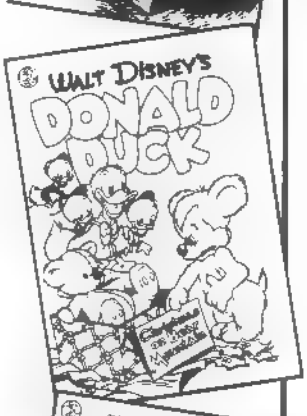

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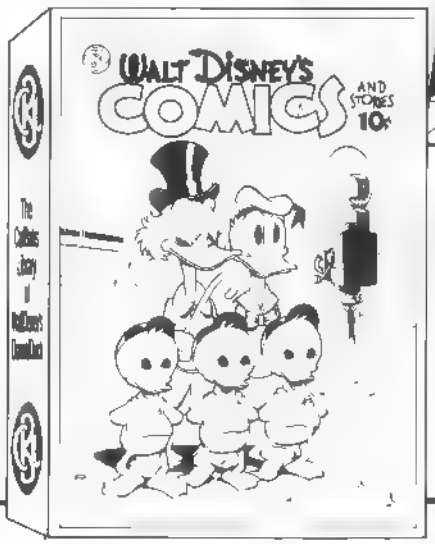

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Playwright for Paper Actors:
The Allen Saunders Autobiography

—CHAPTER SIX—

The Scoop That Saved The Scooper's Job

With the unquenchable optimism of youth, I expected to have no difficulty in finding a newspaper job the summer of 1927 after classes closed at Wabash College.

Ted Robinson, who wrote the lyrics for our college song, "Old Wabash," contributed a daily column to the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*. During a visit to the campus, he read some of my published fiction and leafed through a scrapbook of my cartoons; he assured me that the *Plain Dealer*'s editor would leap at the chance to add me to his staff.

The drive to Cleveland was far from comfortable. I had just had a large cyst removed from the base of my spine and was forced to sit on a folded sofa pillow to keep the rear of my derriere from touching the seat. But the prospect of working for one of America's oldest and most respected dailies was a perfect pain-killer. I arrived in Ohio's largest city filled with blissful anticipation.

The euphoria was short-lived. I quickly discovered that Ted Robinson, though he produced one of the *Plain Dealer*'s most popular features, carried no weight in the employment department. Moments after meeting the managing editor, I made a crestfallen exit from his office.

I got a like rejection at the *News*. But Louis Selzer, editor of the *Press*, sent my fallen spirits soaring.

"We can use you," he announced. "But not until fall, after vacations are over. Meanwhile, go to the Scripps-Howard paper in Toledo, the *News-Bee*, for three months." Within seconds I was back in my car en route to Toledo. . . which would be my home for more than 50 years.

I had visited Toledo once before when I was touring with the Chautauqua—and liked it so well I had written Lois that I hoped we could live there some day. I found the *News-Bee* building and climbed the worn stairway to the city room.

Bob Brown, the surprisingly young managing editor, chewed a pipestem and studied my clippings of cartoons and pulp detective stories for a torturing 15 minutes.

"Wait here," he said at last and headed for a corner offfice where the frosted door-glass bore the words: "Harold Place, Editor." Weeks afterward I learned what happened behind that door. Place had impatiently brushed aside my clippings with a scornful word of dismissal.

"A professor of Romance Languages is the last thing we need around here. Even if he could speak Polish, I wouldn't hire him. He'd be in the way. And he's too old. Twenty-eight is senility in this game."

But the managing editor felt that such an oldster might prove useful someday and offered me $40 a week, which I quickly accepted. I would be drawing $75 a month from Wabash College, the difference between my old salary and the amount paid to my replacement, Annie Leavenworth, wife of department head Clare Leavenworth. Lois and I and little Johnny wouldn't starve.

For the first week it looked very much as if the editor had been right. The dinosaur turned in obituary copy which was textbook perfect. . . of what an obit should not be. He made a mess of people's names and street names. He was slow, dazed, hopelessly incompetent. The managing editor was sharpening his ax and dulling his compassion for the Saturday slaughter. Then came Friday afternoon.

All editions except the final had been "put to bed." Only a skeleton staff remained on duty. It was gray, drizzling, cold. . . suicide weather.

From police headquarters came the report of violent death in the Mexican quarter. Bernie Klivans and the Doddering Cub were sent out on the story.

Bernie was ten years younger than I, but he was wise as a weasel. Within minutes after arriving at the crumbling tenement he had gathered the essential threads of the story fabric and was phoning our city editor from a grocery across the street. I stood helpless and mute in the squalid room of death and tried to keep from looking at the motionless form outlined under sheets on a sway-backed bed and at the dark viscous pools on the smudgy linoleum.

An old Mexican woman crouched in a broken chair while a young priest questioned her and strove painfully to translate her words for the two detectives.

The Doddering Cub was not very fluent in Spanish. I had taught that grammar, but my working knowledge of conversation in the language was slight. I had spent one week in Barcelona, had once chummed with a young South American who looked like, and probably became later, a gigolo. My Spanish was no more fluent than an interpreter's English. But phrases began to filter through my consciousness. . . phrases the detectives were missing.

"I see it all," one of the officers announced at last. "The dead woman's husband got fed up with the boarder, this guy Bill, makin' passes at his wife. So he plugs her and scrams."

"What Bill is that?" the Cub ventured.

The detective showed him a scrap of dirty paper with one

ragged edge. On it were scrawled two words. The first was Bill." The second was smudged and undecipherable.

Can't make out the guy's last name," the officer said, squinting and pursing his lips around a cigar stub. "But we'll get it out of her mother."

He whirled on the priest again. "Tell her we gotta have Bill's last name or we'll take her down to the station."

The priest repeated the threat.

The old woman flailed the air with her stubby fat arms and wailed. *"No hay hombre que se llama Bill. . . Pero. . . en bajo se halla el otro. . . Se ha matado tambien!"*

She leaped unexpectedly from her chair and stumbled into the next room. The Doddering Cub followed her. Here was, I realized, one of those miraculous breaks you read about. Book learning might be due to have its day. Gently, unhurried, in halting Spanish, I set about questioning the weeping mother of the girl on the bed. The wails died down. Dully, between agonized inhalations of her breath, the woman mumbled the details of the pitiful little tragedy; the detectives stood silently in the doorway.

'Who is Bill?" one of them kept insisting. "Make her tell who Bill is and you'll have the key to the whole business."

The Cub pushed through the door and felt his way down a narrow hall, at the end of which were steps leading to the basement. No one followed him. When he came back, Bernie the Boy was standing in the outside door with a wall of wide-eyed faces behind him. The Cub caught his arm and pulled him into the front yard, away from the group of rival reporters, now clustered around the two detectives, jotting frantic notes about the mysterious Bill.

It took few words and fewer seconds to pour the complete story into Bernie's alert ears. Then the Boy sped back to the phone across the street and the Doddering Cub crowded back into the room where the bed was.

I temporized for several minutes before I called the detectives aside. . . long enough for phone wires and typewriter fingers and linotype keys and rumbling presses to join forces downtown. Long enough to make sure that, on their way back to the office, he and Bernie could buy a paper containing a complete news beat on the *Blade*!

When I thought it safe, I told the detectives the facts.

"The boarder had tried to force his attentions on the wife. She repulsed him. Today he came home full of moonshine. He fired four bullets into her body. Then he went down to the basement and seated himself on a drygoods box. He's still sitting there, with a bullet through his head. Oh. . . and his name isn't Bill. It's Felipe."

"B-but. . . what about this Bill guy? Where does he fit in? . . . I mean. . . this note from him they tried to destroy. I found it on the table. . . Maybe he's the husband?"

"There is no such person. . . . No 'Bill.' That piece of paper was torn off the bottom of a statement from a second-hand furniture store. The writing says: 'Bill Paid'."

When the final edition with a detailed account of the murder came off the press, Bob Brown strode into Place's office, spread a copy on the editor's desk, together with the *Blade* final's one-paragraph story, and announced triumphantly: "That's what comes of having a *linguist* on the staff!"

I wish I could report that my proficiency in other languages became a legend, that I amazed many a foreign visitor to Toledo by interviewing him in his native tongue. But the truth is that never once in the 11 years that followed did I have occasion to speak anything but English.

Once was enough, however. There must have been many times when editors were justifiably tempted to cut short my journalistic career. But I was still on the payroll, doing a daily column, when the *News-Bee* expired.

Allen Saunders and Elmer Woggon, right, his partner on the *Big Chief Wahoo* strip, drawing a sketch for Shirley Temple.

—CHAPTER SEVEN—

Reviewing and Interviewing

From childhood I have been an addicted moviegoer, squandering my nickel allowance on Saturday afternoons at Lebanon's only cinema when the family came to the country seat to sell the butter and eggs, and paying the price of a stage-show ticket to watch stars who were born before James Cagney held my loyalty. Naturally, therefore, I was delighted when our managing editor, Paul Jones, turned over the *Toledo News-Bee*'s entertainment page to me.

My competitors on the other Toledo newspapers had always followed a policy of writing only flattering reviews, and our readers appreciated critiques that were intended, at least, to give an honest report. Theater managers were less pleased. One of them dropped his advertising when I ridiculed his feature; he never returned to our pages. Another, however, took harsh criticism philosophically. "Keep it up," he told me. "My patrons have learned to depend on your reviews. If you praise the picture, they know they won't like it. But, if you say it stinks, they line up at the box-office. All I ask is that you be consistent."

Much as I enjoyed my job, it had its unattractive side. Sitting through as many as five shows in a day and assaulting a typewriter at one o'clock in the morning was no sinecure. Drowsiness, I am sure, was to blame for some very bad writing.

In addition to seeing stars on the screen, my job also included seeing them in person and sending back interviews from Hollywood. This was definitely icing on the cake. Studios gave all visiting journalists the red-carpet treatment. A chauffeured limousine picked me up at my hotel each morning. A "still" photographer accompanied me to the set or to the star's dressing-room, and shot pictures to illustrate the interview.

Stars were not always cooperative. Some even refused to be photographed with a newsman. When I interviewed Mae West, I asked for a picture of her standing between me and Elmer Woggon, who had gone along on that trip. She refused. Instead, Wog and I were shot standing with a space between us. Into this was inserted a carefully retouched picture of Mae West. Candid camera shots were not welcomed by the ageless sex symbol. I never used the shot, fearing that sharp-eyed readers might detect the fake and assume that all art from Hollywood was similarly contrived.

Child stars were among the most interesting interview subjects. They were amazingly mature and invariably professional.

I asked Freddie Bartholomew how he felt when he read an unfriendly review of a picture in which he appeared. In his boyish, but typically clipped, British accent, he replied: "When one had done one's best and someone says it isn't quite good enough, there isn't much one can do about it, is there?" He paused and added: "One can only profit from the criticism and try harder next time." I wonder how many adult actors could react so reasonably to a critic's verdict.

At the time of my first junket to Cinema City, the leading box-office attraction was another child, Shirley Temple. An interview with the wonder tot had top priority. I met with her parents in the home she had provided for them. They told me Shirley was outside. Her room was filled with dolls and toys, but she was outside playing with her battery-powered auto. I went out to meet her and it was a shock. Without the capped teeth and the curls, she could have been any seven-year-old. I watched her maneuver the little auto around the circular drive. Her expression was that of a child tolerating an adult. Then a sightseeing bus stopped at the gateway to her estate. She saw cameras hauled out, heard excited oohs and ahs, then favored the tourists with the famous smile. When they drove on, she turned back to me. The smile was gone. As a film star, she didn't waste it on a reporter, but it was worth a million dollars on the screen.

I was not surprised to find Bette Davis as frank as she is talented. She gave me a forthright reply to the question: "Don't you dislike playing nasty shrews?"

She shook her head vigorously. "I don't mind playing a bitch because people know I'm *not* one. But an actress like (here she named another popular actress) always insists on a role where she can be sweet and innocent . . . because she *is* a bitch."

My greatest disappointment, and disillusionment, was Jean Arthur. One of my favorite screen actresses, she had always appeared to me the epitome of the cheery, outgoing girl-next-door. However, when I met her on the set, she motioned the photographer to leave and sat silent, as though frightened, when I started asking warm-up questions. After a few mute minutes, she suddenly leaped to her feet and fled to her dressing room. Like Garbo, apparently, she wanted to be alone.

It was not always necessary to go to Hollywood to find show-business interview subjects. Trains bearing such quarry often stopped briefly in our Union Station and I had to become adept at getting usable copy during the brief pause. Some celebrities were as reluctant to talk as was Jean Arthur. Like Rudy Vallee—with a half-dozen reporters from Toledo's other papers, I met his train, expecting to find reasons for his phenomenal popularity. In the group was a girl from the morning *Times*, eager to make good on her first try at questioning the famous. But when she managed to outshout the rest of us with a question, he replied: "It's in my new book, *Vagabond Lover*." She tried again and he snapped: "Read my book!" Tears of frustration welled in her eyes. At this point Rudy learned that the stop-over in our town would be long enough for him to have breakfast here, and I followed him into the station restaurant, which, for some reason, he preferred to patronize, rather than the dining-car. I took a stool beside him at the counter and as he wolfed down scrambled eggs, I asked why he was so rude to the girl, and, in fact, to all reporters.

"I have nothing against reporters," he insisted. "Only against the men who write the headlines."

"Why carry a grudge against those guys? They are hardworking chaps who sit all day correcting our errors and counting letter spaces." He stopped eating and explained.

"In Akron recently, a young lady reporter asked me how I expected to go down in history. I told her that, as Kreisler is

Saunders and Woggon: Alone in Hollywood.

remembered as a great violinist and Sousa as a great band leader, I hoped to be remembered as a great popular singer. When I read her story I was pleased . . . but that *headline*!"

It said: "Kreisler, Sousa Also Good, Says Rudy."

I am sure he added reporters to his hate list when he read my account of the meeting.

For anyone who hopes to make a career out of fiction writing, even comic-strip writing, newspaper reporting is ideal schooling. Interviewing is especially helpful. My memory bank is crammed with details about unusual characters and facts about offbeat trades and professions. I once sat in Hinda Wasau's dressing-room while, between sips from a bottle of Coca-Cola spiked with aspirin, she told me how she invented the strip-dance. Standing in the wings, I caught Ann Corio's clothes as she undressed to music and tossed them to me. If, in the unlikely event that we ever use a strip-teaser in *Mary Worth*, I have done my homework.

Good interview subjects need not be in the entertainment field; good quotations are uttered by members of a wide variety of professions. Having breakfast one morning with the day's most famous defense attorney, Clarence Darrow, I watched him squeeze juice from a grapefruit half with a huge, powerful hand and heard him state an unforgettable epigram: "Marriage is like dinner in a restaurant: a man orders roast beef, looks at his neighbor's plate and wishes he had taken fish."

At the time when wrestling was at the height of its popularity, drawing larger audiences than good plays, I interviewed a newcomer to the alleged sport, hoping to get from him an admission that it was a phony spectacle. He confirmed my charge with relish, describing tricks used to bring shouting fans to their feet.

"Why, even some of the holds are fakes," he asserted. "For instance, when I came into the trade, I took lessons on how to give a good show. My teacher, an old pro, taught me the 'airplane spin,' in which you get your opponent up on your shoulders and whirl him around several times before you slam him to the floor. 'Why do I do that?' I asked him. 'It's to get him too dizzy to defend himself,' was the reply. Well, I thought it over and it hit me: Every time *he* goes around, *I* go around. Why don't *I* get too dizzy to carry on?"

It made good copy, but my story was not well received by promoters.

As a long-time sleight-of-hand buff, I spent many hours watching entranced from back-stage while masters of the art baffled viewers. One day, as I stood in the wings watching the incomparable Cardini produce fans of playing cards from thin air, Cardini's wife pulled me away with an admonition: "Don't stand there. He can see you from the corner of his eye and instinctively he will hide his moves from you, instead of from the audience."

Great comedians taught me the tricks of their trade, the expressions and movements that could be depended on to draw laughter. The three basic expressions are the 'double-take,' in which the comic feigns indifference and then, as he shuffles off, suddenly looks back, as if his slow-understanding brain had just caught the significance of what he had a moment before ignored. Second in the funny man's ABC's is the "slow burn," a gradual registering of anger by facial expression and finally, the "fig bar," an expression of extreme embarrassment.

Edgar Kennedy was recognized as the master of the "slow burn" and heightened its effectiveness by covering his face with his hand then splaying the fingers to reveal his features. Humphrey Bogart had a simple answer when I asked him how he made himself look amazingly like the Indiana gangster John Dillinger in *The Petrified Forest*: "All I did was make my eyes look tired."

The name of the game in fiction writing is People—their personality traits and their occupations.

Interviewing was not only pleasant but profitable. It gave me a gallery of colorful characters and a fund of odd and useful facts about trades and professions that I still draw on today. Ray Bolger shows you the notebook in which he records, in a code he has devised, the choreography for his apparently impromptu dances . . . you listen to George Burns coaching a protesting Gracie on a new comedy routine as the orchestra plays their entrance music . . . factory employees surprise you with odd bits of information: how far a multi-ton scale platform goes down under a full load (only one-third the thickness of a human hair); and why raw potato chips are vigorously washed before frying (to take out the starch) . . . you watch a lesson in tap-dancing and talk with a bassoon-player . . . you learn that an old, but not priceless, violin may have a Stradivarius label inside and that an elephant smells worse than a skunk, forcing keepers to bathe several times a day, and that circus clowns use Crisco, not cold cream, to remove makeup.

Comedians and carpenters, bankers and basketball players: every one has an interesting story to tell you and to brighten your copy more effectively than countless hours spent in library reading rooms.

Saunders with W.C. Fields on the Paramount lot. A central character (and the working title) of Saunders's strip *big Chief Wahoo* was a medicine-show barker, a carbon-copy of Fields. The great one, Fields, was flattered by the tribute as Gusto starred in hundreds of newspaper strips daily and Sunday for more than a decade.

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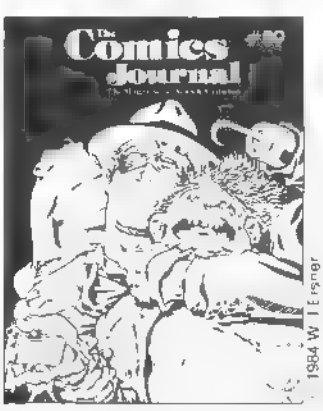

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book reviews

Morality And Comic Malice

by M. Thomas Inge

THE GENIUS OF WILHELM BUSCH: COMEDY OF FRUSTRATION. An English Anthology Edited and Translated by Walter Arndt. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1982. 264 Pages. $39.95.

It is interesting to note the manner in which cultural influences can cross international boundaries and have an impact in unusual and surprising ways. In the same year that the Civil War was concluded in America, a German comic poet, cartoonist, painter, and draftsman named Wilhelm Busch published a picture-book in verse about two devilishly mischievous boys named Max and Moritz. It told of several nearly murderous pranks perpetrated by the delinquent duo that were appropriately avenged when the boys were dumped into a mill and emerge as grain to be consumed by ducks. The grim morality of the book occasioned controversy, but it was an immediate success, and ultimately translated into some 50 languages.

In 1897, over 30 years later, German-born cartoonist Rudolph Dirks, in the employ of Hearst's *New York American*, created a feature to rival the outrageously popular comic strip *The Yellow Kid*. Rudolph Block, the *American* editor, suggested that Dirks refer to *Max und Moritz* for inspiration. Thus was born *The Katzenjammer Kids*, one of the most successful features in comic strip history—a strip that would remain in print for nearly 90 years under the hands of several artists.

Walter Arndt, a professor of Russian at Dartmouth College who has earned distinction for his earlier translations of Goethe, Heine, Rilke, Pushkin, Lermentov, and Akhmatova, has paid a handsome tribute to the versatile and fertile creativity of the genius of Wilhelm Busch. The oblong volume is attractively designed and includes freshly translated versions of nine of what Busch termed "Picture Tales"—actually illustrated comic narrative poems. Also included are a selection of short graphics, poetry, and prose; a biographical outline of Busch's life and career; the original German texts of the poems; a

From the collection of Rick Marschall

Der Partikulariſt.

„Jetzt kommen die Franzoſen — die Preußen kriegen Schläge."

„Haha! Saarbrücken! Gelt, der kleine Lulu!"

„Weißenburg — —! Wer's glaubt!"

„Aber der Max Mahon fangt's fein an. H — u — iii!!"

„Sedan. Pfui Teufel!"

„Gefangen! Was — gefangen — er?"

bibliography; and a substantial introductory appreciation by the translator.

Although the introduction occasionally lapses into an obscure, scholarly style, Arndt can be precise and clear, as when he defines Busch's achievement: "As the last great practitioner of the mock epic, a horrified gourmet of the grotesque, and the lone master of his private genre, the picture tale, Busch stands out as by far the most productive, successful, yet elusive and ultimately enigmatic humorist that Germany has produced."

He also effectively pinpoints the psychological power of the *Max und Moritz* book: "The chief points of the satire, viz., the vindictive repression of children (and other rebels) by a bourgeoisie thwarted and stunted in its own drive for political liberation, and the amoral nature of 'the child,' formerly and officially conceived of as innocent, were widely misunderstood but probably had a subliminal effect."

Busch's personal pessimism and sardonic view of human nature enabled him to view child and adult alike with an honest gaze unobscured by sentimentality and cant—the main thrust of his work's appeal to the modern reader. His attitudes are revealed in such a passage as the following:

We all, it goes without saying, aspire
To wrest from life what we most desire,
And yet, when the just man is vouchsafed
The boon for which he has begged and chafed,
And in the fullness of time succeeds
In grasping what he sorely needs
He stands, crestfallen, and hems and haws:
"Dear Lord, it's not what I thought it was. . . "

Arndt is on debatable grounds, however, when he describes Busch as the "originator of the comic strip." Because of Busch's use of verse and the lack of integration of picture and story—not to mention the absence of other strip conventions—there is a world of difference between his picture tales and the comic strip as it developed in America in the late 1890s. Arndt himself has a peculiar disdain for the comic strip—labeling it "lowly," "crude," and "primitive"—and in particular *The Katzenjammer Kids*, a strip which Kenneth Rexroth once hailed as one of America's major contributions to modern mythology. Arndt is also mistaken when he says that the strip was "naturalized during World War I as *The Captain and the Kids*"; the name change was a result of a 1912 lawsuit between rival newspapers over the characters. Both titles co-existed for a long time with the same set of characters, but drawn by different artists.

The Katzenjammer Kids actually made little use of German character or culture and aside from the seminal influence of *Max und Moritz*. The comic strip owes a good deal more to the American bad-boy tradition in literature as found in *Peck's Bad Boy* or *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in the 19th century and represented more recently by Holden Caulfield and Dennis the Menace. It is easy to overemphasize the influence and impact of Busch on the American comic strip, but he probably had a much greater but unexplored influence on the entire field of comic art and caricature through his animated style and loose sketching techniques.

These caveats aside, mature children and general readers should still enjoy these lively picture tales of which Busch himself accurately said, "Whoever takes them to hand in a kindly heart, as he might music boxes, may find that despite their slovenly appearance there is a good deal in them that has been annealed in the furnace of life, forged with diligence, and assembled not without purposeful craft." Indeed, they constitute a major contribution to the corpus of graphic wit and humor. n

M. Thomas Inge is currently a resident scholar in American Studies at the U.S. Information Agency and head of the Department of English at Clemson University.

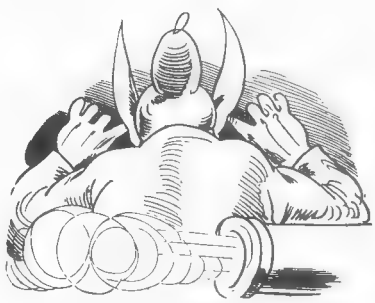
„Pah! Der Max Mahon zeigt's ihnen ſchon!"

„Wörth! Wörth! Hm, ſonderbar!!"

„Mars-la-Tour. Siehſt Du wohl!"

„O Straßburg, o Straßburg, du wunderſchöne Stadt!"

Sie: „Metz, Metz, Metz!" — Er: „Verrrrat!"



„Und das Viktoria-Geſchieß' auch noch!"

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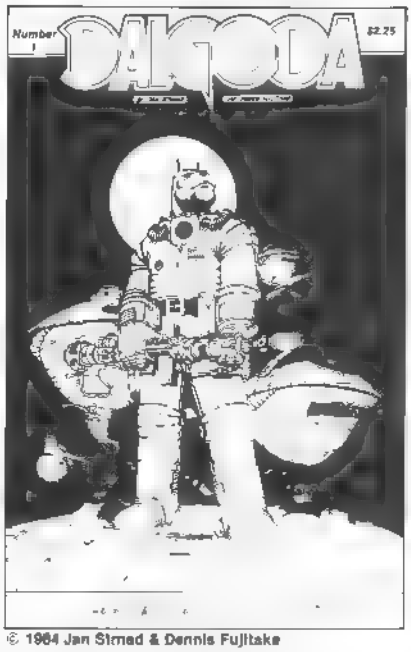

© 1984 Jan Strnad & Dennis Fujitake

DALGODA DEBARKS ON EARTH
...in 1984's most stunning color comic!

The rumors are true!

Dalgoda one of the most eagerly awaited comics titles of the '80s, is scheduled to ship to the nation's distributors on the first day of June, 1984.

In the not too distant future, a friendly race of dog-related aliens from the planet Canida have communicated with Earth. When an unscheduled Canadian starcraft crashes into the Pacific Ocean, Dalgoda's adventures begin. He is on a mission to save his own planet and Earth as well. Will the authorities of Earth listen to Dalgoda before it is too late to stop an invasion by malevolent aliens? Only time will tell.

This premiere issue features a special 44-page story by writer JAN STRNAD, penciller and inker DENNIS FUJITAKE, and colorist KENNETH SMITH. The comic created by Strnad and Fujitake has an added spice in the unique and stunning colors provided by Smith.

Fantagraphics Books is certain that this book will soon become a fan favorite. Retailers should be ready to order back orders immediately after their stock of the first issue runs out. A special incentive plan has been worked out with distributors that will allow them to carry extra back stock of the first issue. This extra back stock will mean very quick response to reorders.

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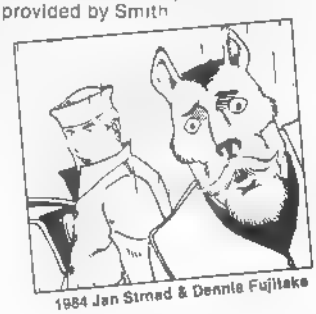
Dalgoda #1. 48-page full-color comic. Published by Fantagraphics Books, Inc. Shipping in June. $2.25. (Canada $2.75) x [quantity]



1984 Jan Strnad & Dennis Fujitake

Annie Featured in NEMO: The Classic Comics Library #8

THOSE OLD NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS MAKE IT LOOK AWFUL BLACK FOR HIM— BUT I'LL BET YOU SANDY THERE WAS A LOT TO THAT CASE THAT NEVER CAME OUT AT THE TRIAL—

1984 C.T.N.Y.N.S.

HAROLD GRAY's Little Orphan Annie gets the red-carpet treatment in this issue, with feature articles by Ken Barker, Harry McCracken, and Donald Phelps. These articles offer exclusive information and insights into the nature of the strip, featuring a great abundance of Little Orphan Annie illustrations. Annie has gained a new popularity because of strip superstar LEONARD STARR's brilliant new version of the strip (and the smash movie didn't hurt, either.)

***NEMO* #8** also presents a special article on the famous cartoonist's first sales, with work by MORT WALKER, MILT GROSS, CHESTER GOULD, ROY CRANE, MILTON CANIFF, and others. Plus, an interview with animator JOE BARBERA (*Tom and Jerry, The Flintstones, The Jetsons*) with illustrations from his famous cartoons, more of the ALLEN SAUNDERS's autobiography, and "Penmen of the Past."

Note to Retailers: *Remember* ***NEMO*** *attracts a different kind of comics reader to your comics shop. Displaying* ***NEMO*** *prominently, in your window and in your shop, will guarantee you many more off-the-street customers who might not be interested in comics shops' typical fare — and will then stick around to sample the rest of your wares!*

NEMO. The Classic Comics Library #8. Published by Fantagraphics Books, Inc. $3.50. Shipping in June. (Canada $4.25) x [quantity]

PEREZ in Giant-Size AH #50
ADAMS, GOLDEN in AH #51

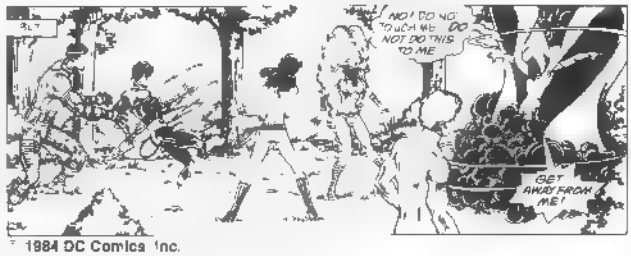
Amazing Heroes has a treat for everyone in its **50th Anniversary Issue**. This issue aims to be better than The 1984 Preview Issue in ***AH #39***—and we all remember how that one did. From its Teen Titans cover by GEORGE PEREZ, to the Perez interview on the inside, to the in-depth discussion of Batman by DENNY O'NEIL and MIKE W. BARR, to many other surprises. An extra long review section, the return of Star Hawks by ARCHIE GOODWIN and GIL KANE, and much more will make this 148-page summer special more than worth the price of admission.

***Amazing Heroes* #51** continues the AMAZING summer issues AH has planned. This issue features an advance look at NEAL ADAMS's new Continuity Comics, with previews of work by MICHAEL GOLDEN, ART SUYDAM, and Adams himself! The cover is by GOLDEN! Also, DC's Atomic Knights.

Both issues carry the latest news, up-to-date checklists, and zany silly covers that you've come to expect from ***AH***.

Amazing Heroes #50. 148 pages. Published by Redbeard, Inc. Shipping in early June. $3.50. (Canada $4.25) x [quantity]

Amazing Heroes #51. Published by Redbeard, Inc. Shipping in late June. $1.95. (Canada, $2.50) x [quantity]



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Famous writers and critics provide introductions for each edition, providing background information and critical reflections on Popeye, Segar, and the series. Collaborating to make this series possible is Richard Marschall, editor of *NEMO: The Classic Comics Library* and Bill Blackbeard, director of the San Francisco Academy of Comic Art.

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Judge
CUBAN BUTCHERIES
INSULTS
MAINE OUTRAGE
DE LOME LETTER
INSULTS
SPANISH INSOLENCE

Penmen of the Past

Zim

It is the 1880s. Photo-engraving has recently liberated comic artists and illustrators from the middleman-restraints of the woodcutting medium. Now artists can have reproduced precisely what they draw; curiously, however, the prevailing style is to attempt a simulation of the woodcutter's exacting parallel-lined shading and crosshatching. The leading pen-and-ink men—Edwin Austin Abbey, Charles Parsons, and, soon, Charles Dana Gibson—achieve their brilliant results by donning the strait-jackets of conservative, realistic formalism.

On the cartooning side of the penman's profession, in *Harper's Monthly* and *N.Y. Graphic*, especially, artists like Charles Green Bush and A.B. Frost and E.W. Kemble are breaking the mold. They are beginning to see things differently. Exaggeration is creeping into their work, and so is animation. They are distorting the perspective of backgrounds, and stretching the anatomy of their figures. Their cartoons are arresting, lively, and so is that of the young genius on the staff of *Puck* magazine, Frederick Burr Opper.

An addition to *Puck*'s staff, in 1882, is 20-year-old Eugene Zimmerman, an immigrant born in Basel, Switzerland, come to New York by way of dear old Paterson, N.J., to use Alphonse and Gaston's phrase. He is a budding cartoonist, but at first his duties are those of an office boy and a color assistant on lithographic stones for Joseph Keppler. In 1883 his first drawings are published.

Zimmerman (he soon economically abbreviated the latter two-thirds of his name) possessed a style that, even at a century's distance, is fresh and humor-filled. His early stuff is awkward, but Zim never shied away from the difficult subject or troublesome anatomy; what was near-crudity soon evolved into free-wheeling nativism. Technically a cousin of Opper, Zim adopted a looser, broader feeling through the '80s and early '90s as Opper grew more "correct."

In 1885 Zim left *Puck* (lured, with Bernard Gillam, to the Republican *Judge*, receiving, by his account, some stock in the magazine for so doing) and became a leader of a school he helped define. He was a *de jure* head of a reorganized art-staff, but his raucous drawings had attracted deserved attention. Perhaps because his early training was on lithographic

The cartoons in this portfolio are all from *Judge* or Zim's Cartooning Course, 1898-1918.

All cartoons from Rick Marschall collection

stones, he established a crayon technique (and a pen technique whose broad, lush strokes simulated the grease crayon) that laid emphasis on simple, thick, flowing lines. By the late '90s, Zim's crosshatching—it looked more like chicken-scratchings—had given way to splotches of wet black to indicate shadows and accents.

As notable an aspect as the drawing style, however, is the character Zim unfailingly infused. His figures are bursting with personality; outrageous character types are regular players; usually gags will depend on the figures' traits rather than situations. After a while his cartoons took on the aspects of gehre studies and character portraits. As with his fellow cartoonists of the day, the subjects were often the most visible, unassimilated "types"—Irish laborers, Jewish merchants, German butchers, hick WASP farmers, rural blacks, hoboes. You may assume that Zim spared no one, but that phrase also assumes that his subjects were victims, and that's hardly the case. More than other cartoonists had Zim become the sympathetic reporter; always a humorist, but armed with chuckles and not barbs.

For *Puck* he had done political cartoons, and he did on *Judge*, too, although he switched party allegiance. As with his social material, Zim's partisanship was more good-natured than that of his fellows. He remained a Republican cartoonist until 1912, when he abandoned politics to specialize in his purely humorous pursuits (*Judge* itself followed this course at the same time).

His most striking work for *Judge* was done in large, half-page color cartoons. Usually on the back page, usually single-panel, they were always drawn in those delicious thick lines and colored with the circus-like brilliance of the lithographer's stone. His output was enormous and so was his influence; *Judge* issued many reprint volumes of his work, and other artists (including Emil Flohri, later a Disney hand in pioneer days, and A.S. Daggy) adopted his stylings. He drew for *Judge* into the late '20s, but in the 'teens his interests had diffused.

For the seminal sourcebook magazine *Cartoons* in the 'teens, Zim wrote and illustrated a column called "Homespun Foolosophy." At the same time, when cartoon correspondence courses were flourishing, he established the Zim School of Cartooning and Caricatures in Horseheads, N.Y., the upstate village he made home. For this course he wrote several complete course books and single-volume compendia that stand today as marvelous collections of tips, history, techniques, and observations on the cartoonist's art. In the '20s he was one of the founders of one of the first major cartoonists' organizations, the American Association of Cartoonists and Caricaturists. He even tried his hand at a newspaper comic strip, *Looie and Lena*, mirroring a formal versatility that harkened back to an earlier period in his career when he did book illustrations for such writers as Bill Nye and James Whitcomb Riley.

Here was a man who loved cartoons and cartoonists, whose life was dedicated to the field and whose work oozed a primal reveling in drawing, in character study, in good humor. His overwhelming competence—of media, subject matter, technique—was masked by a lithe, disarming line. The great Zim died at his home in Horseheads in 1935, a half-century of wonderful work behind him, and two generations of grateful cartoonists and amused readers.

—Rick Marschall

Readers interested in Zim are enthusiastically referred to the serialization of Zim's Autobiography currently running in Cartoonist PROfiles. n

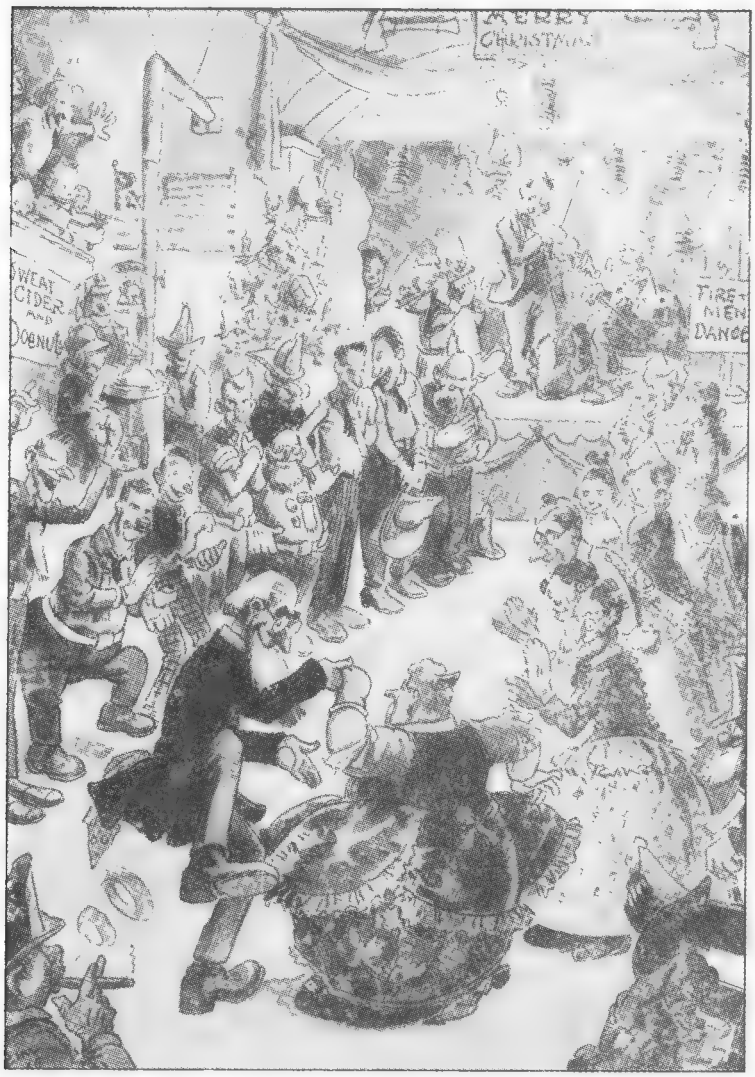
THE AMERICAN QUEEN.

The Hotels and Clubs are filled with the disloyal subjects who refuse to bow to *her majesty*.

HE FOLLOWED DIRECTIONS.

THE DOCTOR (*to patient, approvingly*)—"Well, Patrick, you look greatly improved. I judge you have adhered strictly to my advice and have taken plenty of animal food."

PAT (*earnestly*)—"Oi hov, docthor. The corn an' oats seems to agree wid me, but Oi honestly t'ink hay is bad fer me shtummick."



PRIZE-FIGHT CLIPPING.
Casey hadn't gone three rounds with Coogan before Coogan "put it all over him."

WEIGHTY REASONING.

NORA—"Phwat am Oi *doin'*, mother? Oi'm playin' th' scales. Phwy?"
MOTHER—"Nothin'; only Oi'm thinkin' if ye put many more 'pounds' on thim scales ye'll be crowdin' th' capacity av th' pianny."

WHAT HE CAME FOR.

BRONCO BILL (*of Frozen Dog*)—"Yaas, stranger; I told that 'gospel sharp' that was here a minnit ago to 'git th' hell out uv here.'"
MR SMITH (*the tenderfoot*)—"What did he say?"
BRONCO BILL—"He said that was what he came in here for."

THE COUNTY FAIR

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NEMO No. 6: FLOYD GOTTFREDSON is interviewed about *Mickey Mouse*; a checklist of his Mouse-work; WILLIAM DONAHEY's *Teenie Weenies*; several classic *Alley Oop* Sunday pages; S.J. PERELMAN's early cartoon work; "Penman of the Past" J.H. DONAHEY; and the SAUNDERS autobiography continues; editorial by RICK MARSCHALL, cover by V.T. HAMLIN.

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That it has been unfairly treated and largely neglected are only two of the reasons that *NEMO* is devoting a large part of Issue 8 to this amazing creation; LOA also deserves major reprinting and serious study.

We will meet those requirements in the next overflowing issue of *NEMO*! Ken Barker offers a major study of the strip, examining it by its wondrous themes. Harry McCracken delves into the history of the strip and its creator; among his surprises are the final, unprinted dailies—in which Gray drew the final, actual death of "Daddy" Warbucks (Gray wanted the strip to die with him!). And the inimitable Donald Phelps presents an insightful essay on Annie . . . and those eyes.

As always, there's more! Copious reprints of Gray's art, of course . . . and other features: An exclusive interview with Joe Barbera, father of Fred, Barney, Tom, Jerry, and many others from George Jetson to the animated Smurfs! Also Penman of the Past R.C. Ewer, and a piece by Martin Sheridan on the 1930s King Features bullpen, as well as the unfolding Saunders autobiography as it enters the comic-strip phase. Meet Apple Mary, Big Chief Wahoo, Steve Roper . . . and other Little Orphan Annie's friends!

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